

“...he ventured  
beyond orders...”

Thomas Lombard Peterson

August 17, 1822 ~ March 28, 1863



Thomas Lombard Peterson  
1822 ~ 1863

COMMANDER THOMAS L. PETERSON, April, 1862, entered the Navy. In July was stationed on the flag-ship *Hartford*. February 22, 1863, was promoted as acting master commander, and ordered on gunboat *D*—in the Bay of Mexico. March 28, 1863, at Pattersonville, Texas, while standing by the pilot giving orders, was struck in the breast by a ball, from which he fell dead on the spot, aged 41 years. Was buried at Brash-ear City, now Morgan City, La. Commander Peterson was a brave and gallant officer. His position was fairly won, but heeding no danger, he ventured beyond orders, and fell a sacrifice to his ambition to win fresh honor.

*TRURO - CAPE COD*  
*OR*  
*LAND MARKS AND SEA MARKS*

by  
Shebnah Rich  
c. 1883

TLP ~ Thomas Lombard Peterson  
JHD, Sr. ~ Joshua H. Davis, Sr. (my great-grandfather)  
JHD, Jr. ~ Joshua H. Davis, Jr. (my grandfather)

Dear Family,

Genealogists are cautioned not to probe too deeply into the past, as a horse thief will turn up sooner or later. Our "horse thief" is Thomas Lombard Peterson, a Civil War naval officer whose military record was less than exemplary.

In his *Book of Family History*, JHD, Sr. dismissed him by saying he was "killed on a gunboat in the war of the Rebellion."

In JHD, Jr.'s family papers, my grandfather quoted verbatim from Shebnah Rich's account but omitted the last two sentences.

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The plot thickens. The family would certainly know more than an historian, yet both men provided less information than Shebnah Rich did. Also, cloaked in mystery is the full name of the gunboat referred to as "D\_\_\_\_\_" which I learned was the *Diana*. The death of TLP, brother-in-law to JHD, Sr. and uncle to JHD, Jr., during a pivotal time in our nation's history should have been noteworthy. Instead, it got the brush-off.

Some detective work and good luck paid dividends when I set out to find more information about this man. I have come to some general conclusions as to why TLP did not figure more prominently in our family history.

A shred of information takes on a life when the person in question is placed in a chronology of an era. His "pedigree" is also worth a look.

TLP's grandfather was **Jaazaniah Gross**, a respected sea captain and Truro citizen who lived from 1770 to 1816. JHD, Sr. described him as "a man of unusual energy, activity and enterprise...possessed of qualities of mind and heart that endeared him to a large circle of friends."

Before 1800 Capt. Gross sponsored an Italian youth, Francis Pascal, who came to Truro where he became a mariner, married, and had children before he was lost at sea at age 30.

During the War of 1812, also known as the War of the Embargo, shipping came to a halt. Capt. Gross's talents were turned inward, and he was named to a "committee of safety" following the formal declaration of war on June 18, 1811. This was essentially an intelligence-gathering group. He also served as coroner of Barnstable County from January 30, 1813 to August 9, 1814.

Capt. Gross "**depeparted**" (one of my favorite misspellings from the vital records) this life on March 30, 1816 during the "Great Sickness" greatly lamented by his family and friends.

In 1813 Capt. Gross's oldest daughter Elizabeth married Thomas Lombard, and they had three daughters. The youngest was my great-grandmother Anna Gross Lombard who married JHD, Sr.

On May 30, 1819, Thomas Lombard was lost overboard on the Newfoundland Banks. He left a widow and three orphaned girls; Anna was just a baby. Thomas's place of death established him as a fisherman not a merchant seaman.

In July of 1821, 27-year-old **Elizabeth Gross Lombard** married 21-year-old John Peterson, a house carpenter. On August 17, 1822 **Thomas Lombard Peterson** was born. I am amazed at the number of times I have come across children of second marriages named for the first husband or wife of a married couple.

Four more children were born including John William Peterson who was lost at sea in 1841 at age 17 during the October Gale.

From his birth in 1822 until 1846, when TLP showed up in New Orleans, we can assume a few things about his life:

He had minimal education.

He worked with his father as an apprentice carpenter and found it lacking; or he followed the Truro pattern of going to sea at an early age and working his way up to command of his own ship.



He did not chose the life of a fisherman which may have been “beneath him.” That occupation claimed the lives of his mother’s first husband and his brother John.

He opted for the life of a merchant seaman. Young sea captains were the “*beaux ideals*” of Cape women, and he may have wanted to replicate the prestige and reputation of his grandfather Jaazaniah Gross.

A letter dated August 30, 1846 from Simon Hopkins, a Truro native who sought and found his fortune in New Orleans, to his former teacher JHD, Sr. said this:

“Thos. Peterson, I think was well pleased with his reception, at least I was very much pleased to have his company and felt a reciprocity.”

TLP and Simon Hopkins were contemporaries and possibly childhood friends in Truro. It would be normal for Capt. Peterson, and other Truro mariners, to look up people they knew in New Orleans. His being at this important port city confirms he was engaged in the merchant shipping business.

In May of 1847, TLP married Ruth Hughes in Truro. The 1850 census showed them boarding with a widow in Truro with their daughter Emily Elizabeth. Many years later a newspaper story, featured his youngest brother Elisha Peterson, who reminisced about helping build a house for TLP’s family next to the senior Petersons.

By the time TLP entered the navy in April of 1862 he was almost 40 years old and had been a veteran of the seas for more than 20 years. Therefore, it is no surprise his sailing expertise was valued and he became acting master commander of a ship.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now we need to return to Shebnah Rich’s historical account. First, he is in error about the location of Pattersonville (now called Patterson) which is in Louisiana, not Texas. This bayou country (Pattersonville, Brashear City, the Teche and the Atchafayala) is the setting for Longfellow’s “Evangeline” and is a region described as “Cajuns, Crawfish and Cottonwoods.” TLP did not die in the Bay (Gulf) of Mexico but in this inland bayou area.

For years I ignored a short phrase in Rich’s account which opened another vista in this story. “In July (1862) was stationed on the flag-ship *Hartford*.” The commander of the flag-ship *Hartford* was none other than David Farragut who became our country’s first rear admiral - also in July of 1862. Assuming TLP served the seven months between his assignment there and his taking command of the *Diana*, several things come to mind.

Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles said Farragut “was more willing to take great risks to obtain great results than any officer in either army or navy.” As the admiral was a mentor of sorts to TLP, Farragut’s derring-do was not lost on him.

His seven months with Admiral Farragut came after the capture of New Orleans and before the battle of Vicksburg. This time was mostly devoted to the blockade stretching from Pensacola to Galveston with a skirmish here and there but no important battles.

Benjamin Butler was relieved of command of the Gulf Campaign and Nathaniel P. Banks of Massachusetts took over. This may or may not have had a bearing on TLP’s next assignment, but I do believe his talents as a seafarer were recognized and played a part in his being assigned command of the gunboat.

Unfortunately, his skills at the helm of a merchant vessel did not translate to naval warfare.

Shebnah Rich was a savvy wordsmith, and his choice of some common words raised a red flag. I checked with Webster to see the precise meanings of “brave”, “gallant” and “venture” and had my eyes opened.

Brave	adj.	Having courage; making a fine show; colorful Excellent, splendid
Gallant	adj.	Showy in dress or bearing; spirited, brave Nobly chivalrous and often self-sacrificing
	noun	A young man of fashion; ladies’ man; suitor; paramour
Venture	verb	Expose to hazard; undertake risks and gambles To proceed esp. in the face of danger

The accounts which follow tell TLP’s story better than I can. I found most of this information on the Internet. I also found a descendant of a crew member of the *Diana*, and we have been in touch.

I offer profound apologies to all Civil War buffs who are probably aghast at my simple-minded approach to a large, complicated subject. I could have included volumes of fascinating material, but I pared it down to what I felt was pertinent to this story and which I found most interesting.

Following are some of my conclusions and random bits of information I learned as I did my self-imposed crash course about the Civil War navy, how it performed in the Gulf of Mexico, and how TLP fits into the picture.

## CONCLUSIONS & MISCELLANY

TLP was by nature an arrogant, defiant man. This did not erupt one time to cause his death, but it was a lifelong character flaw which probably manifested itself in other situations. I believe JHD, Sr. saw things in him contrary to his own ethical beliefs and chose not to record negative things for posterity.

Newspaper reports, authors, naval history, historical accounts, and JHD, Sr., danced around what they'd really like to say about TLP if they weren't gentlemen. I don't think an author or historian in this century would mince words or refrain from some piercing name-calling.

Ruth Peterson received a widow's pension. She had not remarried as late as 1873, and had the responsibility of five children to raise.

Admiral Farragut's famous "Damn the torpedoes! Full speed ahead!" was uttered in 1864, so TLP missed that brush with history. Torpedoes were the name given to water mines. Fortunately, the water mines became so water logged in the Mississippi many of them did not explode on impact.

At the beginning of the Civil War, the U S. navy was ragtag. By the end of the war it was second only to the British navy.

The amount of money found in TLP's pocket is puzzling. Could it have been provided to him for "sugar deals" at plantations during reconnaissance missions?

Another Internet find was the existence of a book called *A Gunboat Named Diana*. I located a copy of this regional interest book and wrote the author for more information and permission to use sections of his book in this project.

According to the article called "The Sailors Life", TLP was at or over the age limit for naval personnel. Perhaps he saw his patriotic duty and shaved a year or two off. Was his assignment to the Gulf random or did he request it? We know he was in New Orleans at least once, and he may have fallen in love with the area which was the antithesis of Cape Cod.

I think the family was humiliated by the article in the Boston newspaper reporting the loss of TLP's life and his responsibility for the deaths of crew members and capture of the *Diana* by the Confederates.

Susan Davis Hanson  
July 2001

DIANA

StRam:  
dr. 3'2";  
cpl. 61;

<http://www.hazegray.org/danfs/csn/d.t>

a. 2 12-pdr. how.

DIANA was a steamer offered for charter or sale at Galveston, Tex. on 23 September 1861 by the Houston Navigation Co., along with steamers BAYOU CITY and NEPTUNE NO. 2. She was mentioned as a steamer of the Houston Line on 19 December 1861 when she took the seized Federal metal life boat FRANCIS in tow for San Jacinto, Tex., to be put in sailing trim for CSS GENERAL RUSK fitting out in that port. Mentioned as a steamer under Captain Blakmen, she was ordered to carry the crew of CSS GENERAL RUSK from Galveston to Houston on 20 January 1862.

DIANA and BAYOU CITY were eventually fitted out as rams and used as gunboats of the Texas Marine Department [See Annex III] for the defense of Galveston Bay. One-inch iron protected their bows and their decks were barricaded with cotton. The two warships, listed by the Texas Marine Department as gunboats, were still on duty in Galveston Bay as of 27 October 1863.

SwIrcGbt:  
t. 239

DIANA was a steamer reported to have escaped from Farragut's passage of Fort St. Philip and Fort Jackson 24 April 1862, into the city of New Orleans. She was taken possession of by USS CAYUGA on the 27th.

DIANA was appraised for Union service at New Orleans on 5 May 1862 and became a transport on interior waters. Finally assigned to assist Federal ships in Berwick Bay, La., she was sent into Grand Lake, 28 March 1863, to make reconnaissance down the Atchafalaya to the mouth of Bayou Teche. When she had passed the mouth of Bayou Teche, near Pattersonville La., Confederate shore batteries cut away her tiller ropes, disabled her engine, and caused her to drift ashore where she surrendered. Her Union commander Acting Master T. L. Peterson, along with five other men were killed and three were wounded in this brave 2-hour action.

DIANA was taken into the Confederate army service on Bayou Teche in support of troops at Camp Bisland, La. On 11 April 1863 under Lieutenant Nettles of Valverde Battery, CSA, she showed great skill as a gunboat in driving Union troops back on Bayou Teche from Camp Bisland. Nettles, taken severely ill, was relieved on 13 April 1863 by gallant Captain Semmes of the Artillery as thousands of Union troops moved in with the support of Federal gunboats for a fierce action on Bayou Teche and Camp Bisland that lasted until sundown. She concentrated on the center of the advancing Union line with a battery of Parrott guns until a 30-pounder shell penetrated her front plating and exploded in the engine room to kill the first and assistant engineer and damaged her engine. Pulling beyond range of the Union guns, she completed repairs near midnight and was ordered the following morning to move up to Franklin, La., to support the right flank of Confederate troops by sweeping the fields and woods formerly held by Union forces. When badly outnumbered Confederate forces began their withdrawal from Franklin, she maintained her position near an already burning bridge until General Mouton and his staff followed their troops across to safety. Semmes and his brave crew then abandoned and burned DIANA to prevent her capture by Union forces.



## CREW OF USS DIANA

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DUDLEY, ? : Pilot: 30 Mar 1863(1)

HALL, Thomas G.: XO: 30 Mar 1863(KIA)(1): Living Descendant - A. David Hall

PETERSON, ? : Commanding: 30 Mar 1863 - KIA(1)

### NOTES:

(1) - Captured by Confederates on Bayou Teche, LA.

[http://reliant.enertec.com/scottb/Names/W\\_names.htm](http://reliant.enertec.com/scottb/Names/W_names.htm)

WIGNER, W. D, Age 21, Gunboat Service, Pilot, Enlisted in Watertown Twp, Additional Details-Pressed as pilot into rebel service, ran his boat aground and escaped to Union lines, when the Diana was captured, and escaped by swimming, Served as a first-class pilot throughout the war.

<http://www.ehistory.com/uscw/library/periodicals/ahotcw/section07/224.cfm>

28-Pattersonville, La. Gunboat *Diana* with Detachment of 12th Conn. and 160th N. Y. an board. *Union* 4 killed, 14 wounded, 99 missing.

<http://www.youngsanders.org/Teche.html>

Fighting in St. Mary Parish was, however, generally offensive rather than defensive. On March 27, 1863, the U. S. Navy gunboat Diana yielded to foolhardiness and steamed into Rebel-held Pattersonville. Confederate sharpshooters and artillery opened fire turning the Diana into a floating morgue. After three hours of slaughter, the gunboat surrendered to the Southerners.

<http://members.tripod.com/~pipeslines/mcfarlands28th.html>

**On March 28, 1863, the 239-ton federal gunboat Diana was on a reconnaissance mission in the upper Grand Lake area when the gunboat's commander disobeyed orders and ventured up the Atchafalaya River. Exploiting the blunder of the ship's captain, men of the 28th, along with other units, attacked the ship. After a fierce, three-hour engagement in which 30 of the ship's 150-men company were either killed or seriously wounded, the commander of the Diana surrendered the vessel.**

March 28, 1863 (Saturday)

Convinced that rebel fortifications at Port Hudson are unassailable, Nathaniel Banks withdraws his command. General Gardner reports, "Enemy has gone back to Baton Rouge...two gunboats and Essex are all that remain."

Banks's new plan is to return his command to western Louisiana for another advance up Bayou Teche and the Atchafalaya, and he informs Halleck of the change.

"I went to Bayou Boeuf in person...for the purpose of examining the situation of affairs there and conferring with General Weitzel in regard to our future operations.

"In preparation of the new campaign, General Weitzel sends the gunboat *Diana* on a reconnaissance mission and it's not long before Weitzel is informed that *Diana* has been captured by the enemy.

"According to Weitzel, 'I ordered the *Diana* by the Grand Lake route to make a reconnaissance...Instead of taking the route I ordered...they went by the Atchafalaya, right in the teeth of the enemy. I believe she and all on board are gone.'"

*Website: "This Week in the Civil War"*

In November the 28th was ordered to the Bayou Teche region to help Gen. Richard Taylor stop the enemy invasion there. Upon arriving, they were assigned to Gen. Alfred Mouton's Brigade at Camp Bisland, a small fort on the Teche just above Patterson. Col. Gray soon became the commander of the post and was ordered to keep an eye on enemy movements in the Grand Lake area.(15) After nearly a year in the Army, the Louisiana men had yet to face the enemy. Their chance came shortly in the form of the Yankee gunboat Diana. While on a reconnaissance mission in the upper Grand Lake area in early March, the Diana's commander disobeyed orders and moved too far up a channel of the Atchafalaya. Since the entire area was under the watchful eye of the Confederates, his blunder was soon exploited by a detachment of the 28th, which along with other units, was lying in wait.

The Confederates sprang the ambush on the ship and for three hours poured volley after volley of rifle and cannon fire into it. To the men penned up in the Diana it was a nightmarish hell. The decks were slippery with blood and the groans of the wounded drifted through the darkened, smoke-filled ship. The roar of the Rebel guns, the splat of minie balls against the sides of the ship, and the crash of artillery shells splintering the decks helped create an unforgettable scene.

The Diana's commander, after seeing one crewman after another fall to the deck from the Rebels accurate fire, finally raised the white flag. The confederates then removed the 150 sailors, 30 of whom were dead or seriously wounded, and took over the vessel.(16) Taylor had the Winn Parish men of Company K to move the ship up the Teche to help cover Camp Bisland."(17)

Headquarters, near Berwick Bay March 28, 1863

"I have the honor to report the capture of the Federal gunboat *Diana* at this point to-day. She incubated five heavy guns. Boat not seriously injured, and will be immediately put in service. Enemy's loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners, 150."

R. Taylor, Major General

Website: *"This Week in the Civil War"*

Confederate General Richard "Dick" Taylor  
was the son of Zachary Taylor.  
His sister was the first wife of Jefferson Davis.



# Letters of the Civil War

MARCH 30, 1863.

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FROM GEN. BANKS'S DEPARTMENT.  
Full Particulars of the Capture of the Federal  
Gunboat Diana.

From Our Special Correspondent with the  
Expedition.

Headquarters Weitzel's Division,

Unable to read this line,

Monday, March 30, 1863. Midnight.

On Sunday evening the rotunda of the St. Charles Hotel was thronged as usual with the hypergenious crowd of people, but early in the evening the loyal men, and our officers observed considerable jubilation among the rebels assembled there, who stood together in knots of half a dozen or more whispering some terrible tale. We were not long in ascertaining the cause of this treasonable commotion which proved to be the report that the enemy had expired the gunboat Diana, with two companies of infantry at Bayou Teche. Upon making the proper inquiries of the conductor on the rail road running between Algiers and Brashear City, we learned that the sad news was indeed true.

Hurrying over to Algiers an accident happened to the ferry boat plying between New Orleans and Algiers, which caused me to miss the morning train, the only train departing for Brashear City. Fortunately an extra train was loading with a portion of the 21st Indiana heavy artillery regiment, which was ordered to proceed to Bayou Boeuf, the headquarters of Gen. Weitzel. Securing a few crackers and a loaf of bread, your correspondent jumped into one of the cattle cars, and in a few hours was wending slowly on his way to the vicinity of the disaster. The train reached here, a distance of 80 miles, in nine hours.

To Captain J. B. Hubbard, A. D. C., to Gen. Weitzel and Assistant Adjutant General of Weitzel's Division, who went up on the steamer Southern Merchant on Sunday afternoon with a flag of truce, I am deeply indebted for the following interesting particulars concerning this unhappy event. I am also under lasting obligations to several of Gen. Weitzel's staff for the hospitalities extended on the trip to their headquarters.

## OBJECT OF THE EXPEDITION.

On Saturday afternoon the 28th inst., Captain Peterson of the Gunboat Diana, having on board a detachment of twenty-nine men from Co. A, 12th Connecticut regiment, and forty men from Co. F, 160th New York, was ordered to steam through Grand Lake to the mouth of Bayou Teche. The object was to make a sort of reconnoissance in that vicinity and to discover if possible the correctness of a report in circulation, that the rebels had a force of 800 infantry and two pieces of artillery on the small island between Grand Lake and Atchafalaya river. Lt. P. D. Allen, A. D. C. to Gen. Weitzel, accompanied the boat, and he likewise was ordered to gather all possible information regarding the strength and position of the enemy from the negroes along the banks of the stream. Captain Peterson continued to push on beyond the mouth of the Teche, in order to pass down the Atchafalaya river which was in direct violation

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of Gen. Weitzel's orders. Lieut. Allen then asked Captain Peterson what he would do in case he was suddenly attacked by a rebel battery. He replied he was not afraid of any batteries they had, and that he could blow away six of their batteries to pieces. Another object of this expedition was to discover if the rebel steamer Dart had run out of the Teche, as it was rumored by secesh.

#### THE SURPRISE AND ATTACK ON THE DIANA.

Not more than an hour after the conversation alluded to above had taken place, when being just above Patersonville, Capt. Peterson saw a body of the enemy's cavalry, and one or two sections of light artillery on the shore. Lieut. Allen then advised Capt. Peterson to turn back and avoid if possible a conflict with them, but Capt. Peterson would not regard protestations of Lieut. Allen but kept on up the Bayou, and when he got within range he opened upon the rebels with his 30 pound pivot rifled guns. The rebels at once replied with earnestness, getting their light batteries into a ranking position and sending their 300 Texas cavalry dismounted, to shower their leaden hail upon our gunners. The fire of these Texas sharpshooters was terrific, and as their deadly balls began to whistle over the decks, it told fearfully upon our men. The gunners being completely exposed to the fire of the rebel sharpshooters it was but the work of a few minutes to pick off every man who dared to show himself on deck.

The rebels imitated the strategy of Gen. Weitzel, as he exhibited, in his attack on the rebel gunboat "Cotton," which he compelled the rebels to burnt. The plan was, for each section of artillery to range themselves in such a position as to command the whole surface of the Diana. Capt. Peterson continued to fight them bow on, all his guns being on the bow of the Diana, and still retreating slowly with his boat, when the fatal bullet completed its errand of death, and Capt. Peterson, who was standing in the pilot house, rushed out and shouted, "Great God, they have killed me," falling a lifeless corpse on the deck. Lieut. P. P. Allen then assumed command of the Diana and slowly begun to retreat down the Atchafalaya river towards Brashear City. The rebels seemed infuriated at this attempt to escape and they fired with fearful rapidity, using artillery and rifles with good execution.

The grape and cannister of the enemy completely cut away the bulwarks of the Diana. One shot penetrated the escape pipe which enveloped the boat in scalding steam. The oiler rope and the bell wires communicating with the engineers' room, were also shot away. The escape of the steam made it impossible to distinguish any object. Executive officer Hall of the Diana, having been killed in the early part of the engagement, the command then devolved upon Lieut. P. D. Allen, who found it impossible to get sailors to stand by the guns, and the sailors seeing the vastly superior forces of the enemy, and the dead and dying laying around the deck, were in a measure disheartened.

The battery used by the rebels was an old Valverde battery, formerly in the regular service of the United States. In the absence of Capt. Savers, the commander of the battery, it was under the command of Lieut. Netties. The Texas sharpshooters belonged to Waller's Texas Battalion, and are the same body of desperadoes who boarded the Harriet Lane off Galveston. They are a disorganized mob, under no military discipline whatever, paying no regard to the orders of officers, but fighting and roaming at their own pleasure. They were mounted on mules with a few Creole ponies among them. It was the same body of desperadoes who

were driven into the swamps by our troops sixty miles above New Orleans last August. In the above engagement they lost all their horses, many of them they drove into the swamp in order to aid their escape, from whence it was impossible to extricate a number of them, and our men were obliged to leave them there to starve to death.

It seems they have never received another supply of horses, owning no doubt, for the great scarcity of good animals in the ? Confederacy. Some of these fellows carry immense bowie knives, two and three feet long.

#### NOBLE CONDUCT OF MR. DUDLEY, THE PILOT.

Mr. Dudley, the pilot of the Diana, after the tiller ropes were cut away, and the wires connecting with engineers' room severed by shot, went to what is called the fighting wheel, and endeavored to back down the Diana by her wheels, as her rudder was shot away. While he was standing on the latter, giving verbal instruction to the engineers below, as to which wheel should be used, a solid shot cut the ladder in two, and knocked him overboard.

Previous to this he was fearful that the rebs might capture the Diana, and he being a Louisianian would be hung if captured, so he threw himself overboard. Finding himself in the water he rose to the surface, and looking up espied the white flag, which told that the boat's crew had surrendered, and that he was in a very unhealthy place if caught. He swam to an island, a distance of nearly a mile, with three negroes who also jumped overboard from the Diana, and after a short ? he began his tramp of eight or nine miles to our fortifications at Brashear City. Mr. Dudley had a terrible time in escaping, being obliged to wade through swamps where the most venomous reptiles abounded in numbers. He was compelled to use a club to beat off the Moccasin snakes which were remarkably numerous. Finally, with blistered and bleeding feet, Mr. Dudley and the three negroes managed to reach the edge of Grand Lake, and seizing an old dilapidated boat the party escaped to our pickets on Saturday night.

#### KEEP UP THAT FLAG-THE FIRST MAN THAT LOWERS IT DIES.

While Lieut. P. D. Allen was below in the engineers' room giving some orders in regard to the boat, one of the sailors hauled down the American flag. On coming up he looked for the flag, but it was gone. He made inquiries for the name of the man who pulled down the flag, stating he would shoot him on the spot if he knew who it was, and raising the flag again to the topmast, he said; "There, let that flag float where it is so long as one man remains on to aid the Diana." After this there seemed to be a mutinous spirit prevailing among the sailors, who refused to obey Lieut. Allen, as he was not a naval officer. Finding it impossible to have the guns loaded and it subordination exhibited, he was reluctantly compelled to order the hoisting of the white flag.

Lieut. Allen is praised by all on board, and the best evidence of his bravery is a sight of his uniform, which is completely riddled and hanging in shreds. At one time Lieut. Allen was obliged during the engagement to go below, and passing through the cabin three solid shots came tearing through, scattering a perfect shower of splinters. Three round shot passed completely through the pilot house.

#### THE SURRENDER OF THE DIANA.

The moment the white flag was raised, the rebels ? down their two

gunboats, , the Era No. 2 ? smokestacks ? to relate we painted white, and the Hart. The Texans were not long in ? the Diana, and they were no sooner on board than they began to rob the prisoners of all their private effects. The Texans robbed Captain Peterson and Executive Officer Hall, and all the dead of their ? and ?.

Capt. Peterson had four or five hundred dollars in U. S. Currency in his pocket, which the rebels took charge of for their own private use. Capt. Peterson was killed in the pilot house and was the first man shot. A ball penetrated his heart. Executive Officer Hall was shot through the chest and lived but two hours after he was wounded. Lieut. Dolivetr was killed instantly, a discharge of canister completely disemboweling him. Capt. Hewett, senior army officer on board, Co. F. 160th New York Vols., was struck on the scalp with a piece of shell. The wound of itself, was not dangerous, but the violent concussion has completely paralyzed him, and he is not expected to recover. The Diana was plated with thin iron around her boilers, but was only protected against ?.

The rebels have seized a valuable prize, for the Diana had a fine armament, consisting of five guns, all mounted on her bow, one 30 pounder rifled pivot, two 32 pounders smooth-bore, and two 12 pounders, one rifled, and one smooth-bore. She had on board a large supply of ammunition.

The ? of the Calhoun, which lay at Brashear City, hearing the firing, started to ascertain the cause, when the pilot ran her aground, where she remained until 2 o'clock on Sunday morning. Thirty tons of coal, and large quantities of ammunition, where thrown over board to lighten her off. Had the rebels known of the disaster, she also would have been lost.

Lieut. Dolliver, who was killed, was a native of Cape Cod, Mass.

Cicerone.

(Boston Daily Traveller, April 10, 1863, pg. 2, col. 4.)

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*Here arose, and here still stand, white pillared monuments to another life than that of most other parts of the lowlands- the life of the great estates. Here thrived a style, French and American, that was not that of the rural places, nor yet that of the cities. Away from the Mississippi's concentrations, yet in spirit closely related to it, the men and women of the Teche made a rich existence for themselves- the high manner in rustic environment.*

*-Harnett Kane, The Bayous of Louisiana*



The French founded Louisiana in 1682 when Robert Cavalier de La Salle stood on the banks of the Mississippi near the Gulf of Mexico and claimed all the land drained by that great river in the name of King Louis XIV.

French settlers first began to arrive in Louisiana in the early eighteenth century, but France's efforts to colonize Louisiana were at best half hearted. Louisiana could hardly be considered an ideal place for French men and women to relocate. It was hot and humid with none of the conveniences of continental life, and crawling with reptiles and insects.

Nevertheless a few French settlers succeeded in establishing themselves along the waterways of Louisiana. They learned about the flora and fauna of the area from native American tribes, and managed to adapt to life in this sub-tropical region. They eventually imported slaves from Africa to work the large farms or plantations they developed here.







©Charles Fryling

## Spring Green

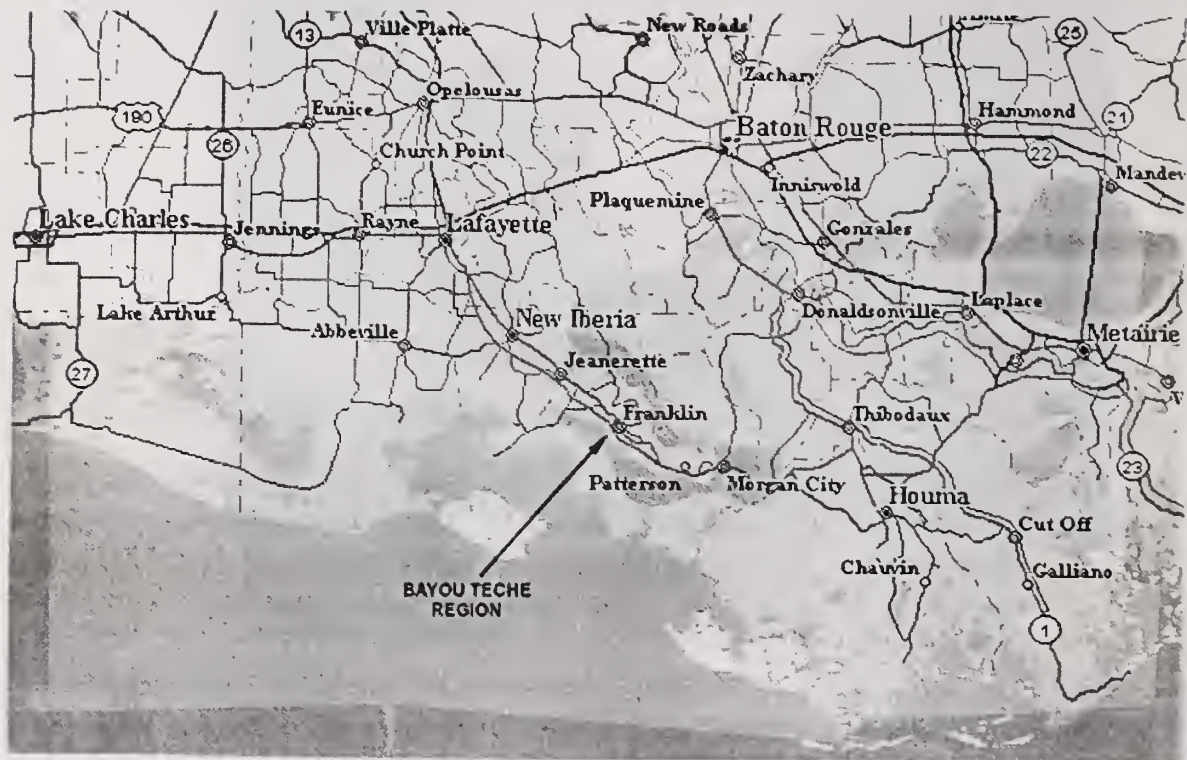
Spring green in the Atchafalaya. When the new leaves come out on the Bald Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) in the spring the swamp turns a beautiful green color. Clear water indicates that local rain water dominates this area of the Basin. The annual rainfall is about sixty inches.



©Charles Fryling

## Bald Cypress Trunk

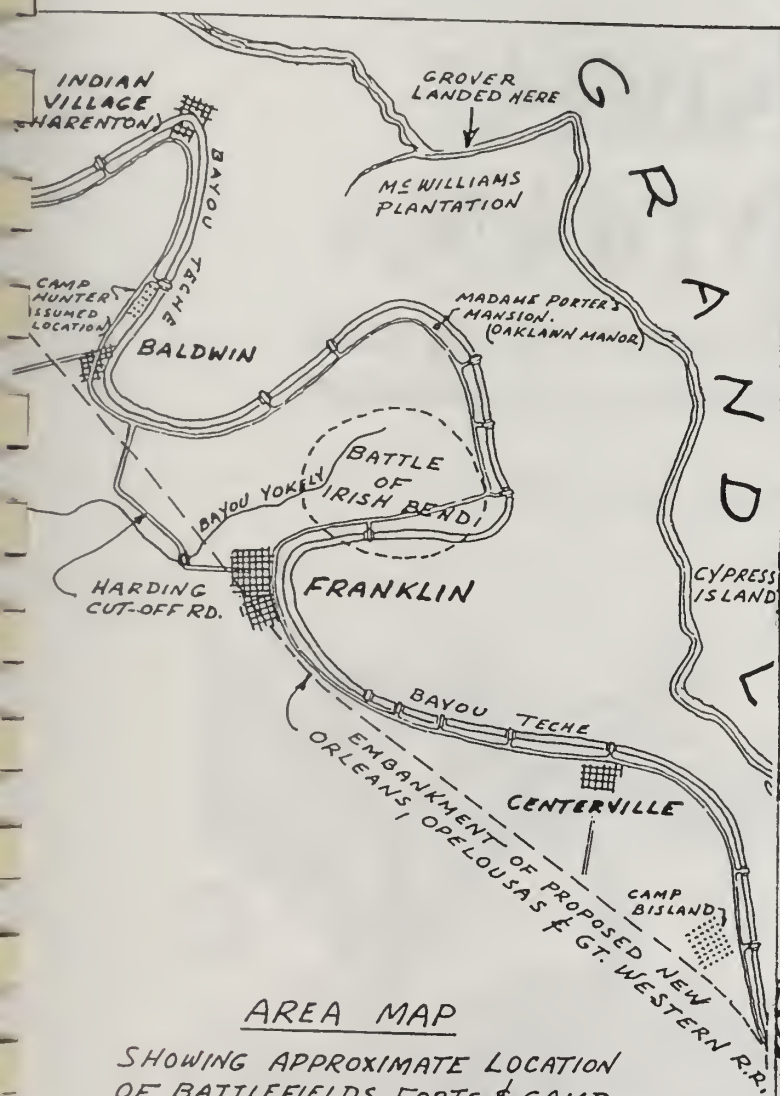
The swollen basal trunk of a Bald Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*). The trunk is fully exposed since the waters of the Atchafalaya are down during the fall and early winter. In the spring the tree may have ten or more feet of water covering the base. The Bald Cypress is the state tree of Louisiana.



## Bayou Teche

Name comes from Indian legend that writhing snake (Tenche) made stream bed, or from *Deutsch* after German settlers. Approx. 80 miles long, bayou starts near Port Barre, converges with Atchafalaya near Morgan City. Important waterway in Louisiana history for Indians, traders, settlers.





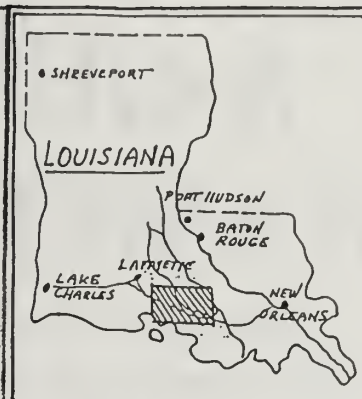
### AREA MAP

SHOWING APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF BATTLEFIELDS, FORTS & CAMP SITES ALONG BAYOU TECHE (1863)

SCALE:

0 1 2 3 4 MILES

DRAWN BY M. RAPHAEL 4/1/75



# A GUNBOAT NAMED DIANA

... and other exciting stories of Civil War battles  
which raged in the bayou country of Louisiana.

*By Morris Raphael*



*Jacket by the author*

*M. Raphael  
June, 1993*



Weitzel continued his reconnaissances of the lakes, bays, rivers, and bayous.<sup>11</sup>

On March 27, 1863, the gunboat *Diana* embarked on a mission which was not altogether considered official business. The stout little steamer, armed with two 32-pound broadside guns, a Parrott and Dalgren brass-pieces, steamed up the Atchafalaya towing two capacious barges. One of the crewmen carried a document which was purported to be a bill of sale for a large amount of sugar which was to be acquired from the "Widow Cochrane."<sup>12</sup>

The *Diana* docked near the widow's sugarhouse which was located below Pattersonville, and the crewmen began rolling hogsheads of sugar aboard one of the barges. Madame Cochrane, after examining the bill-of-sale, cried out that the document was a fraud. Meanwhile, Captain Thomas Peterson of the *Diana* began to suspect that there was Confederate plotting involved in this sugar speculation as the Rebels and the captain's pickets began skirmishing on the Cochrane grounds.

Captain Peterson feared an attack. Although 20 hogsheads of sugar had already been loaded, he ordered that the sugar be returned to the widow. Immediately thereafter, all hands were piped aboard and the *Diana* steamed towards Brashear City, just in time, avoiding a well-planned ambush.<sup>13</sup>

The following day, Weitzel ordered the *Diana* to make a run of the Grand Lake area. The vessel was to plunge down the Atchafalaya to the mouth of the Teche and return by the same route. A detachment of 29 men from Company A, 12th Connecticut Infantry, and 40 men from Company F of the 160th New York accompanied the steamer on the detail.<sup>14</sup>

The Federal command was worried about a strong concentration of enemy troops in the lake area as there were rumors that 300 Rebel infantrymen and two field pieces were stationed on a small island in the vicinity. Weitzel sent his aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Pickering Dodge Allen, to gather whatever information he could from the Negroes along the way. But one main reason that Weitzel sent Lieutenant Allen on the cruise was to make sure that Captain Peterson did not deviate from the general plan. Weitzel's opinion of Peterson was that the captain was inclined to be rash and needed some assistance in judgment.<sup>15</sup>

The bill-of-sale episode was said to be a fraud set up by "Rebel spies who lurked within the Union lines" trying to lure Yankee vessels into a trap. Although the *Diana* succeeded in getting away safely on its first visit, the Rebels eagerly waited and hoped for its return. They laid in wait along the Atchafalaya in the vicinity of Pattersonville hidden in different sectors. These troops included Colonel Henry Gray with several hundred infantrymen of the 28th Louisiana,

### *Capture of the Diana*

Waller's Texas Cavalrymen (who were remounted after their earlier swamp disaster) under command of H.H. Boone, and Lt. Nettles and Captain Joe Sayers with five brass pieces of the Valverde battery.<sup>16</sup>

It may be well to mention here that at Berwick Bay, in the general direction across from Fort Buchanan, there are two routes for vessels to take if they wish to navigate in a westerly direction—the Atchafalaya River, or the Grand Lake route. If a vessel chose the upper route along Grand Lake, it would reach an intersection with the Atchafalaya River about six miles distant. Then, if it plunged down the river past the mouth of the Teche, past Pattersonville, and on eastward, it would wind up back at Berwick Bay. It would have made a complete loop, encompassing a large, swampy, and wooded area, which is actually an island (see map page 61).<sup>17</sup>

As the *Diana* made its run, reconnoitering the lakes, the Rebels watched intently in their hideouts, hoping she would navigate in their direction. They could spot the gunboat far across the island, and watched its movement as it left a tell-tale trail of smoke. But as the day wore on, they were getting impatient, especially since it appeared that the vessel was headed back to Brashear along the lake route.<sup>18</sup>

But someone aboard the *Diana* said, "Supposing we go around by Pattersonville and give the Rebs a shot or two." Another laughingly stated, "And stop at the Widow Cochrane's!" As others joined in, this was all Peterson needed. The gunboat was turned around and headed down the Atchafalaya, past the mouth of the Teche, which was in direct violation of Weitzel's orders. Lt. Allen, trying to discourage the captain, asked what would he do if he were suddenly attacked by a Rebel battery. He replied that he was

### *A Gunboat Named Diana*

not afraid of any batteries they had, and that he could blow any of their units to pieces.<sup>19</sup>

About an hour later, as the *Diana* was approaching Pattersonville, Peterson spotted a body of Rebel cavalry and one or two sections of light artillery on shore. Although Lt. Allen advised Peterson to turn back and avoid a conflict, the captain disregarded his protest, and when in range opened fire upon the Rebels with his powerful 30-pound pivot rifled gun, killing and wounding a half-dozen cavalymen. The Confederates replied with their light batteries in a raking position upon the vessel, accompanied by 300 dismounted Texas riflemen, who “showered their leaden hail” upon the Yankee gunmen who were completely exposed on deck. Since all guns of the *Diana* were located on her bow, the Texas sharpshooters picked off every man who dared to expose himself. A special correspondent of the *Boston Traveller*, who wrote a detailed account of the bloody engagement, stated that “The Rebels imitated the strategy of General Weitzel as he exhibited it in his attack on the Rebel gunboat *Cotton*.”<sup>20</sup>

As the *Diana* retreated slowly down the Atchafalaya, a “fatal bullet completed its errand of death, and Captain Peterson, who was standing in the pilothouse, rushed out and shouted, ‘Great God! They have killed me,’ falling a lifeless corpse on the deck.” Lt. Allen then assumed command of the *Diana* as he slowly retreated down the river towards Berwick Bay. The Rebels, fearing their prize was about to escape, stepped up their firing with good execution of artillery and rifles.<sup>21</sup>

The grape and cannister volleys completely cut away the bulwarks of the *Diana*. One shot penetrated the escape pipe,

### *Capture of the Diana*

which enveloped the boat in scalding steam, making it impossible for the crew members to distinguish any object. Because of the dead and dying and the constant firing, Lt. Allen found it impossible to get his sailors to stand by their guns, and the infantry was powerless for fear of exposing themselves to the raking fire. Many sought protection between decks and took shots intermittently.

The officers caught hell! Lt. Dolliver was killed. Lt. Allen was shot along with two infantry lieutenants. Captain Jewett was the next victim. Lt. Hall commanded the vessel until he fell. The dead and dying were strewn across the decks. A plunging shot, which penetrated the double casemating, crashed through the pilothouse, and Enfield bullets perforated the iron sheathing. A fireman had one leg cut smoothly off, a boatswain's mate received a shot which tore the bones of both legs completely out. McNally, one of the engineers, was killed by a fragment which came crashing through the engine-room from a shell that had exploded in the wheelhouse. Scalding steam began to fill the space below where the men were fleeing for shelter.

The bloody battle raged on for nearly three hours. Lt. Harry Weston, last to command the ill-fated vessel, tried desperately to run the gauntlet, as he continued backing his unmanageable vessel slowly downstream in the crooked bayou for a few miles, only to be followed by the Rebs who continued their deadly fire at close quarters. Since the stern was unprotected, the bow was maneuvered to face the gunners as much as possible. The trim *Diana* was said to be unrecognizable at this stage. "The upper works were riddled like a sieve from stem to stern. Every berth was cut in splinters. Chairs, tables, knives and forks, books, broken



### *A Gunboat Named Diana*

glass and china, shattered panels, blood-wet beds, and pools of gore—and the dead and wounded—were everywhere.”<sup>22</sup>

The exultant Rebels, who were beginning to feel a taste of victory, grew frantic as they yelled and shouted along with the clap of howitzers and the crack of rifles and revolvers.

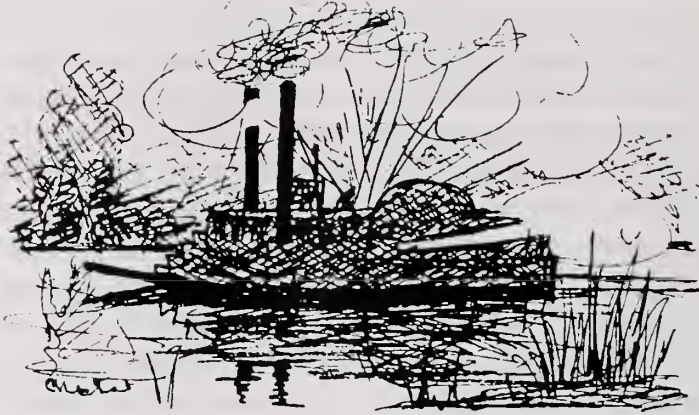
After tiller ropes and connecting wires were severed by shot, a Mr. Dudley, who was pilot of the gunboat, resorted to what was called the fighting wheel as he tried to back down by the boat's wheels since the rudder was shot away. While he was standing on the ladder, giving instruction to the engineer as to which wheel to use, a solid shot cut the ladder in two and he was knocked overboard.<sup>23</sup>

Since Dudley was a Louisianian, he feared that if the *Diana* were captured, he'd find himself in a very unhealthy situation—he would be hung. As soon as he surfaced, he saw the white flag of surrender on the vessel. Three Negroes jumped overboard and joined Dudley as they swam to safety to an island which was about a mile distant.<sup>24</sup>

At the sight of victory, the Rebels went wild. The lifeboats aboard the *Diana* were riddled with bullet holes, but the Confederate officers managed to make it to the gunboat in sugar coolers. (Sugar coolers were coffinlike boxes used as syrup receptacles on sugar plantations, but were modified in some cases by the Rebels to be used as boats to accommodate one or two persons.)

Acting Captain Weston then surrendered to Major H.H. Boone of Waller's Texas Battalion. It may be well to mention here that this was the same group of Waller's horsemen who were demoralized earlier in the campaign when they were trapped in the St. Charles Parish swamp and forced to leave their horses behind. By this outstanding action of the capture

### *Capture of the Diana*



The Federal gunboat *Diana* is captured.  
(From a sketch by Chestee Harrington)

of the *Diana* they had redeemed themselves and were proud of the victory.

One of the Texas rangers who couldn't wait for transportation swam to the *Diana* and let out an Indian war whoop. The Texan grabbed a violin which belonged to Chief Engineer Lieutenant Robert Mars, jumped overboard and swam to the bank, where he mounted a caisson and began playing and dancing to the tune of *Dixie*. Then his comrades, overwhelmed with their accomplishment, paddled out in sugar coolers and swarmed aboard the gunboat to celebrate. Momentarily, a jubilant Colonel Waller arrived on board. Two Confederate gunboats, the *Era No. 2* and the *Hart*, appeared and also joined in the activities.<sup>25</sup>

Around two p.m., on that same afternoon (March 28) while the battle was still raging, Captain M. Jordan, commander of the *Calhoun*, heard the heavy firing in the direction

### *A Gunboat Named Diana*

of the Teche, gathered his crew and immediately left the wharf at Brashear City to investigate what the roar was all about.<sup>26</sup>

He proceeded the wrong way. He navigated the Grand Lake route, while the *Diana* was struggling for its existence in the Atchafalaya River, just a few miles west of Berwick Bay. The crew aboard the *Calhoun* became utterly frustrated as the vessel ran hard aground at the intersection of Bayou Sorrell. It was hung-up on sunken logs and their efforts to loosen the vessel by backward and forward movements went to no avail.<sup>27</sup>

The crew then ran out hawsers and kedge anchors astern, trying to heave the gunboat into deeper water, but this was also an unsuccessful attempt. The gig, in charge of R.C. Bostwick, was ordered to Brashear City for assistance. At around 7:15 p.m., the four men who had escaped the *Diana*, came on board and told them the sad story of the capture of the vessel.

This depressing news “shook-up” the *Calhoun*’s command, for it not only faltered in taking the wrong route, but was now, itself, vulnerable as easy prey to the victory-motivated Rebels. Captain Jordan, in a frantic effort, decided to lighten the ship by throwing overboard coal, anchors, chain, cable, shot, shell, water, provisions, and other heavy objects. In the meantime, he kept his engine constantly working at the kedge anchor. At about one o’clock the following morning, the crew succeeded in getting the *Calhoun* afloat and with a deep sigh of relief, Jordan returned his vessel safely to Brashear City.<sup>28</sup>

After receiving confirmation of the *Diana*’s tragic capture, the commander of the *Calhoun* ordered his boat to be “coaled up” and then headed to Pattersonville under a flag of truce. There they would see about arrangements for the dead and wounded, and, if possible, secure the parole of the



prisoners. Although the Rebels stopped the *Calhoun* at the head of Berwick Bay, she was later allowed to proceed to Pattersonville. The *Calhoun* succeeded in its efforts and returned with 99 paroled soldiers and seamen—also the bodies of Captain Peterson and Master Mate Dolliver. But three army officers, three engineer officers, and Captain Henry Watson, Jr. were kept as prisoners. Included in the list of prisoners was Lt. Pickering Allen who had suffered a serious bullet wound in the left side of his body.<sup>29</sup>

According to Weston, there were 33 Union men killed and wounded in the bloody engagement—seven of whom were officers. He listed the Confederate casualties as 40 killed and wounded. A contradiction to this account was noted in Charles Spurlin's book entitled, *West of the Mississippi with Waller's 13th Texas Cavalry Battalion*. He stated that the Confederates lost only one man and his death was accidental, while General Taylor placed enemy loss at 150. Taylor also reported that the gunboat was not seriously damaged and that it could be repaired and placed into service immediately.<sup>30</sup>

At this juncture, the Confederates found themselves blessed with several gunboats. These included the newly acquired *Diana* and *Queen of the West*; the *Era No. 2*; the *Hart*; and the ram *Webb*. The *Queen* and the *Webb* were stationed at Butte-à-la-Rose on the upper Atchafalaya.<sup>31</sup>

Weitzel warned Banks that he needed more light-draft gunboats to maintain his superiority in Berwick Bay. He emphasized that he wanted vessels drawing less than seven feet of water. Losing the *Diana* with her heavy guns and ammunition was a serious blow to the Federal fleet. The wounded Lt. Allen, who was respected and loved by his fellow Yankees, and even liked by his Rebel captors, made his dramatic surrender of the vessel at Franklin when he stepped up to Captain T.A. Nettles of the *Diana* and said, "Take care of her sir, and hoist your flag on her." (Soon after the vessel was captured, Taylor placed Nettles in command.)<sup>32</sup>

Later, a strange thing happened aboard the Rebel steamer *Cornie* which had been temporarily converted into a hospital ship. Loaded with Confederate wounded and some Yankee prisoners while enroute to New Iberia, the captain became panic-stricken and returned his boat to Franklin. Lt. Allen then procured a six-shooter in town, confronted the captain, and demanded the surrender of the boat. This good steamer, with nearly one hundred Rebels, fell into the hands of the Federal forces.<sup>33</sup>



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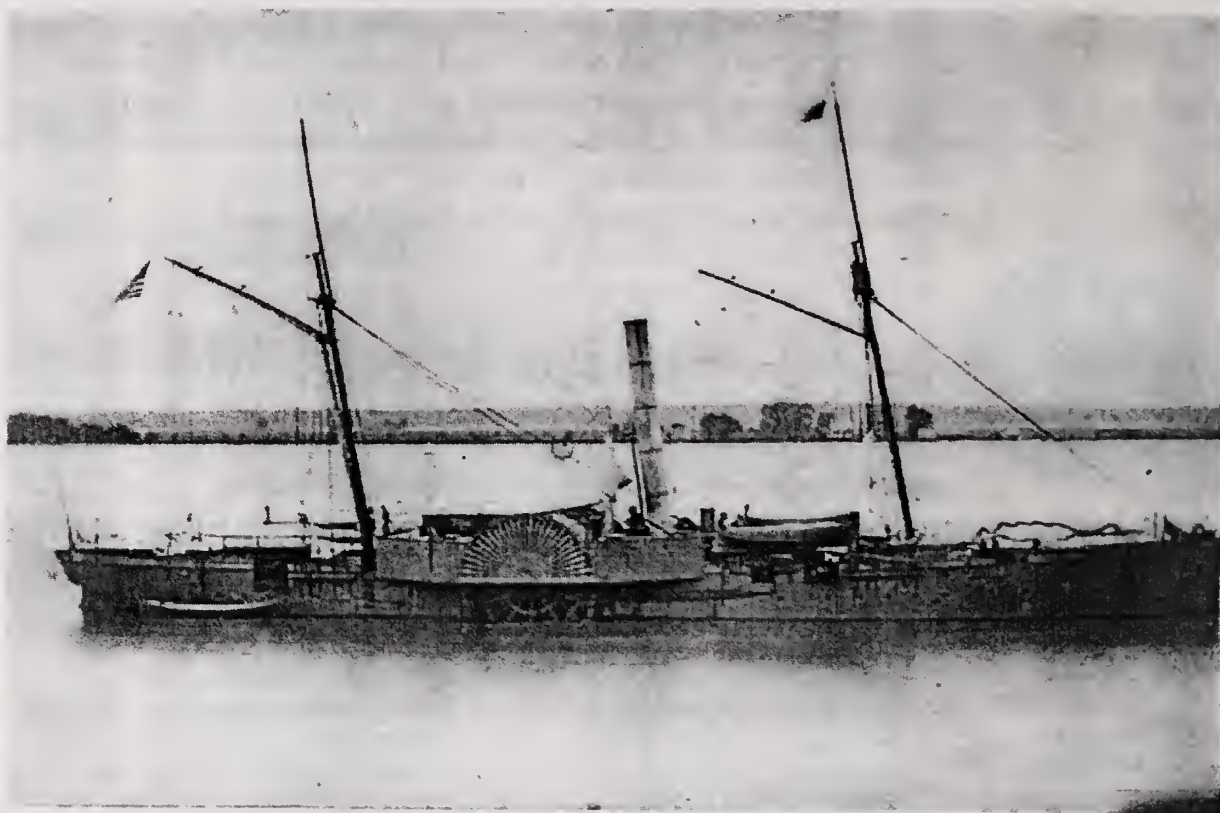
CREDITS

**VAL VERDE BATTERY.** During the Texas invasion of New Mexico (*see* TEXAN SANTA FE EXPEDITION), soldiers of Confederate brigadier general Henry H. Sibley's<sup>qv</sup> brigade captured five guns, three six-pounders and two twelve-pound howitzers, at the battle of Val Verde, New Mexico Territory, on February 21, 1862. Volunteers from three cavalry regiments then organized a battery with the trophy cannon under the leadership of Capt. Joseph Draper Sayers,<sup>qv</sup> later governor of Texas. The seventy-man unit fired its first shots as a provisional organization at the skirmish at Peralta, New Mexico Territory, on April 15, 1862. The battery was officially organized on June 1, 1862, at Fort Bliss, Texas. After the Confederate retreat from the region, the Val Verde Battery accompanied Sibley's brigade to New Iberia, Louisiana. The battery fought numerous battles and skirmishes in Louisiana. It was notable for the capture of the Union gunboat *Diana* in March 1863. In April the unit served in the battle of Bisland, where Sayers was seriously wounded, and performed well as the rear guard of Maj. Gen. Richard Taylor's<sup>qv</sup> army at the battle of Vermillion Bayou. After Sayers was wounded at Camp Bisland, Capt. Timothy D. Nettles took command of the battery and retained it until the end of the war. In the summer and fall of 1863 the Val Verde battery served with Gen. Thomas Green.<sup>qv</sup> The Val Verde Battery also served in Taylor's army during the Red River campaign<sup>qv</sup> of 1864. In April the battery fought at the battles of Mansfield<sup>qv</sup> and Pleasant Hill; two rifled cannons captured from federal forces replaced the two antiquated howitzers of the battery. The battery then served with Confederate forces shadowing the Union army's retreat through the end of May in skirmishes at Monett's Ferry and De Louch's Bluff. As Confederate forces disbanded in the spring of 1865, the gunners of the Val Verde Battery chose to bury their cannons rather than surrender them to federal authorities. After Reconstruction<sup>qv</sup> the guns were exhumed. The two six-pounders that had survived the war had badly deteriorated, but the two three-inch rifles survived and are displayed at the Freestone County Courthouse in Fairfield and at the Confederate Reunion Grounds near Mexia.



**Image Date:** Circa 1863

**Notes:** This is one of Farragut's smaller gunboats, probably the U.S.S. Genesee. [East, "Civil War Album," text, p. 80; image, p. 80.]



**Image Date:** Circa 1863

**Caption:** Ironclad. Essex, Farragut's fleet. Mississippi River La.

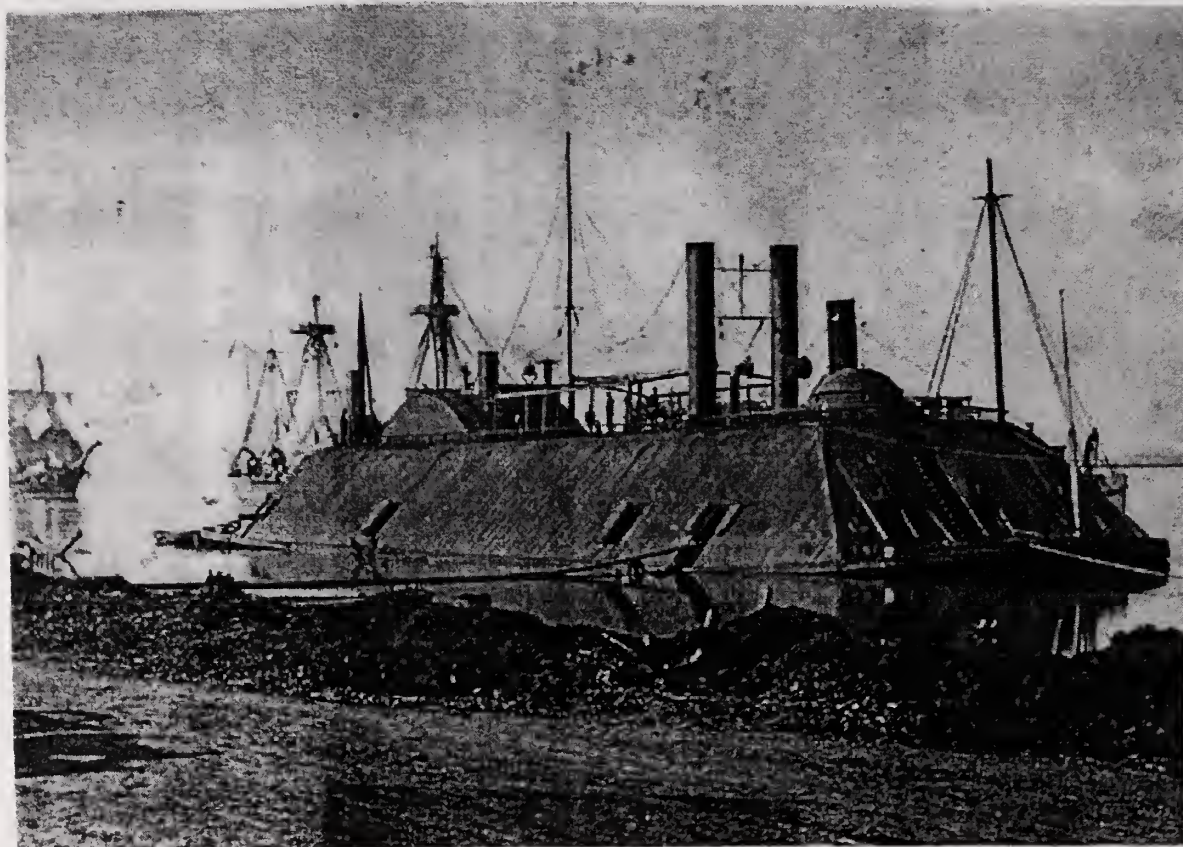




Image Date: Circa 1863

**Caption:** Steamship Mississippi Farragut's fleet Mississippi River La. Burned by her own after grounding in front of the rebel batteries at Port Hudson, during the attack by the fleet. On the night of the 14th March 1863. To their mortification & chagrin after reaching the shore, she floated off & blew up five miles below the batteries.

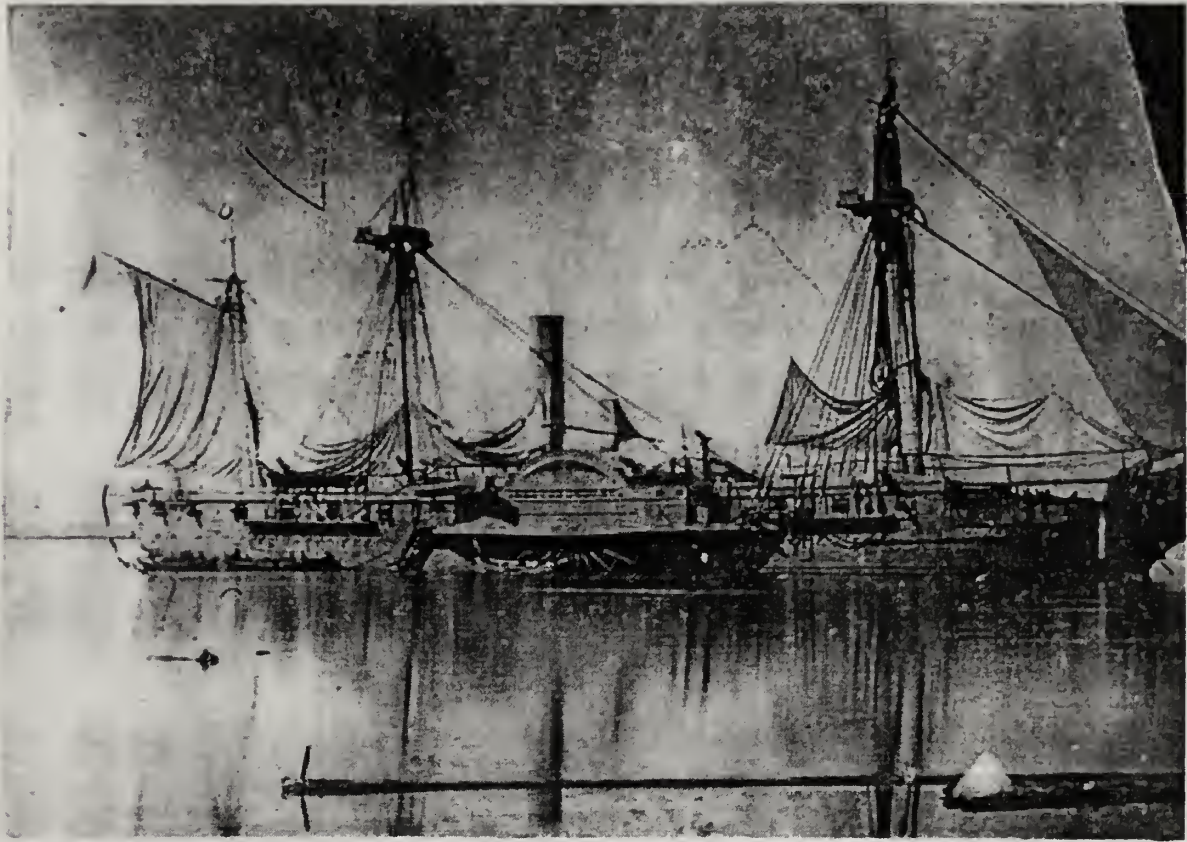


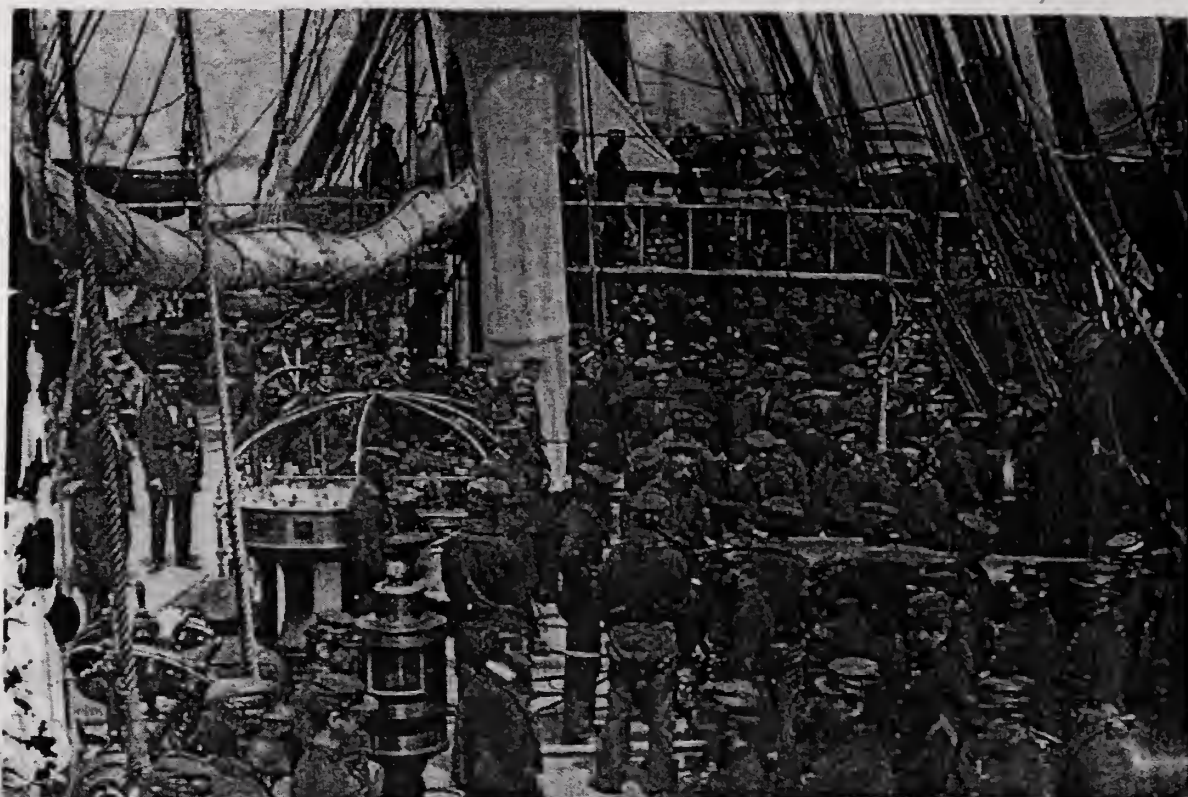
Photo # NH 42367 "The Total Annihilation of the Rebel Fleet ...", off Memphis, Tennessee,





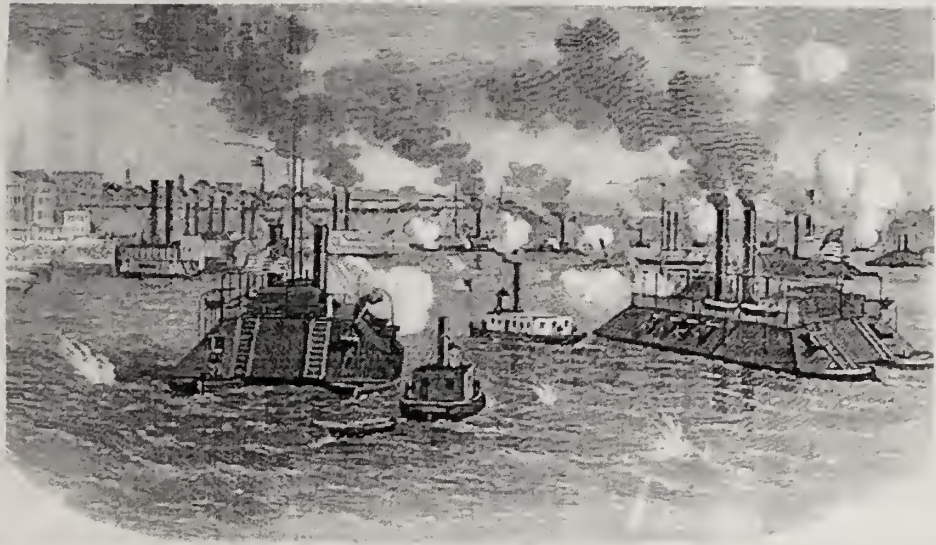
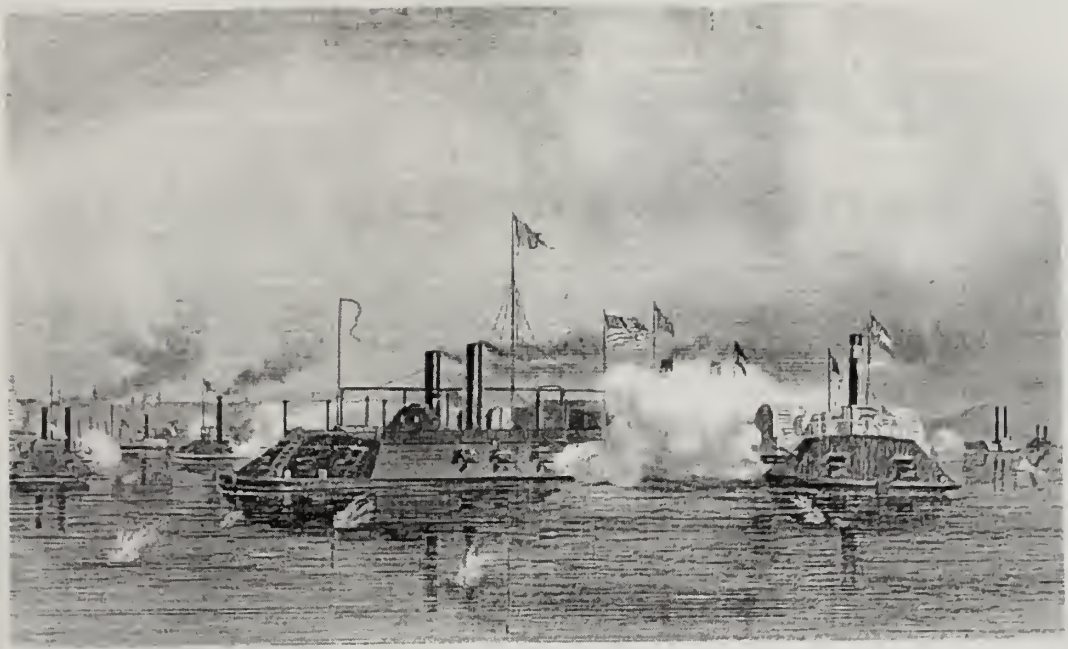
Image Date: 1863

Caption: Crew of Richmond at quarters. Baton Rouge La. 1863.



DECK OF GUNBOAT AND CREW





The New Southern Gun Boat.



**Name:** Gideon Welles



**Born:** July 1, 1802

**Died:** February 11, 1878

Gideon Welles, secretary of the navy under Presidents Lincoln and Johnson, was born in Glastonbury, Connecticut, to Anne Hale Welles and Samuel Welles, a maritime merchant and shipbuilder. Gideon Welles graduated from the American Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy (today, Norwich University) in Vermont. He first studied law, then began writing for the *Hartford Times* (CT). In 1826 he became part-owner and editor of that newspaper, helping to transform it into a leading organ for the Democratic party and the Jackson administration.

From 1827-1835 he served as a Democrat in the Connecticut state legislature where he sponsored a general incorporation law after which other states modeled similar legislation. In gratitude for his support, President Jackson named Welles as Hartford's postmaster, a position he held from 1836-1841. For the next few years he concentrated on his editorial duties with the *Hartford Times* until 1845 when another Democratic president, James K. Polk, appointed him to head the Navy Department's Bureau of Provisions and Clothing.

In the mid-1840s Welles became active in the antislavery movement, privately supporting the Free Soil ticket in 1848. He anonymously wrote antislavery editorials for newspapers such as the *New York Evening Post* and the *National Era* (Washington, DC). He renewed his allegiance to the Democrat party, supporting their 1852 presidential nominee, Franklin Pierce. He finally broke with the Democrats and joined the new Republican party after the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. He and Niles founded a Republican newspaper, the *Hartford Evening Press*, and in 1856 Welles ran unsuccessfully as the gubernatorial nominee of the Connecticut Republicans. He then joined the Republican National Committee, convincing them to distribute Hinton Helper's antislavery treatise, *The Impending Crisis of the South* (1857).

After Republican Abraham Lincoln was elected, the new president selected Welles to be Secretary of the Navy. Welles faced a difficult task as the Civil War began. The problems of the small number of personnel and ships in the U.S Navy were compounded by the defection of about half of the officer corps to the Confederacy and by the outmoded condition of the naval vessels. To make matters worse, the Union lost its key naval base in Norfolk when Virginia seceded. Against such obstacles the Union Navy would have to enforce the president's policy of blockading the Confederate ports. Welles worked diligently to expand the Navy's capabilities: converting merchant ships into naval vessels; developing a river fleet; constructing, purchasing, or leasing hundreds of ships; and increasing Navy personnel from 7,600 to 51,500.

The navy secretary also oversaw a committee that studied naval military strategy. Implementation of their policy recommendations resulted in Union victories at (among other places) Hatteras and Roanoke Island, North Carolina; Port Royal, South Carolina; Fort Henry on the Tennessee River; Donelson on the Cumberland River; and New Orleans. The Union blockade was never total, but it proved to be a serious barrier to the Confederacy obtaining materiel and supplies from outside sources. Welles also turned his attention to the administration of the Navy Department: reorganizing it, improving contracting procedures, and creating a science academy within its structure. By 1865 the U.S. Navy was surpassed in strength only by the British Navy.

Welles supported emancipation, but he was more hesitant about federal government recognition and enforcement of civil rights for black Americans. His states' rights views were compatible with those of President Andrew Johnson, who kept him on as navy secretary. He supported the Reconstruction policies of the embattled president against the Radical Republicans. His three-volume *Diary* provides an insider's view of the Lincoln and Johnson administrations. Almost a decade after leaving office, Welles died in Hartford.

## David Glasgow Farragut

July 5, 1801 - August 14, 1870



When Virginia seceded in April 1861, Navy Capt. David G. Farragut told his Virginian wife that he was "sticking to the flag." "This act of mine may mean years of separation from your family," he told her, "so you must decide quickly whether you will go north or remain here."

Although Farragut was Southern born, married a Virginian -- "a very superior woman in character and cultivation" -- and resided in the South, he was squarely behind the Union. "God forbid," he said, "that I should have to raise my hand against the South." But he would not hesitate to obey orders to the best of his abilities.

They went north, to Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y., where Farragut was assigned a desk job until January 1862, at which time he was chosen to command an expedition to capture New Orleans. He assembled nearly 50 ships carrying more than 200 cannon, with which he blasted his way past the forts protecting the city. Sailing on up the Mississippi River to New Orleans, Farragut forced its surrender and became a Northern hero. For this performance he received the Thanks of Congress citation and was made the Navy's first rear admiral.

Farragut next wanted to take his fleet and capture Mobile Bay, but the opening of the Mississippi River was the first priority, and he contributed to the success of that long struggle by blockading the mouth of the Red River and supporting the siege of the Confederate fort at Port Hudson. After the surrender of Vicksburg and Port Hudson in July 1863, Farragut sailed to New York for repairs to his flagship, the *Hartford*.

Farragut went back to the Gulf Coast in 1864 and fought the fiercest of his battles when he "damned the torpedoes" and blasted his way into Mobile Bay. A ship's officer wrote that when Farragut saw the bodies of his killed crewmen laid out on the deck after the battle, "It was the only time I ever saw the old gentleman cry. But tears came in his eyes like a little child."

Sixty-three year old Farragut's health gave out in November, and he returned to New York to recuperate. He was received with great public enthusiasm and given \$50,000 by grateful businessmen to be used to by a New York home. Congress created the rank of vice admiral and bestowed it upon Farragut. The next year they conferred the rank of admiral upon him.

*Fascinating Fact:* In it's 19 months of service, the *Hartford* was hit 240 times by enemy fire.





## Major General Benjamin Butler

Ben Butler was a highly controversial, politically appointed general who won some early victories for the Union cause. He had backed Jefferson Davis for President in 1860, but after secession he became an ardent War Democrat.

After the 6th Massachusetts Regiment was fired upon in the streets of Baltimore, Butler lifted the resulting blockade of Washington by bringing the 8th Massachusetts by ship to Annapolis and from there by rail into the capital. Lincoln rewarded him with a commission as major general of volunteers.

Posted to command of the Department of Virginia he suffered a reverse at Big Bethel but managed to retain control of Fortress Monroe at the tip of the York-James Peninsula. He increased his unpopularity with southerners by declaring escaped slaves of secessionist masters to be contraband and thus subject to seizure by the military. In August of 1861 he led the army portion of the successful operation against Hatteras Inlet in North Carolina.

After the navy captured New Orleans in April of 1862 and Butler was appointed military governor in charge of the occupation forces. Never afraid of controversy, he had a man hanged for tearing down an American flag, closed secessionist newspapers, and confiscated the property of citizens who refused to swear allegiance to the United States. He received the nickname "Spoons" for allegedly confiscating silver from churches and homes. His most lasting nickname, that of "Beast" Butler had its origins in his infamous General Order Number 28, which he issued in response to the insults and abuse that Federal officers were routinely receiving from the women of New Orleans. The operative part of this directive read "hereafter when any female shall by word, gesture, or movement insult or show contempt for any officer or soldier of the United States she shall be regarded and held liable to be treated as a woman of the town plying her avocation." Butler was condemned throughout the South for this order, and he was branded an outlaw by Jefferson Davis. Butler refused to back down. But the harassment of his men stopped and no women were ever arrested under the order.

This action coupled his failure in his next operation, designed to take Fort Fisher resulted in his removal from command. He resigned from the army in 1865.

He was elected to Congress the next year. He was a leader in the movement to remove Andrew Johnson from the office for too lenient treatment of ex-Confederates. He subsequently served five terms in Congress and one as Governor of Massachusetts.

Benjamin Franklin "Spoons" Butler

Born:  
November 5 1818, Deerfield NH

Died:  
January 11 1893, Washington DC

Pre-War Profession:  
Teacher, lawyer, politician.

### War Service:

April 1861 Brig. Gen. of Massachusetts militia, lifted the blockade of Washington, May 1861 appointed Maj. Gen. of Volunteers, Big Bethel, Hatteras Inlet, New Orleans, military governor, removed December 1862, commanded Army of the James 1863, Bermuda Hundred, sent home to await orders, unsuccessful North Carolina expedition.

### Post War Career:

US congressman, governor, presidential candidate.

### Note:

A controversial political general, notorious for his use of contraband slaves and his disrespect towards the ladies of New Orleans.



## Benjamin Butler's New Orleans "Woman's Order"

# BUTLER'S PROCLAMATION

An outrageous insult to the  
Women of New Orleans!

**Southern Men, avenge  
their wrongs !!!**

One of the major problems that confronted by Maj. Gen. Benjamin F. Butler on his occupation of New Orleans in April of 1862, was the abuse his soldiers endured from patriotic Confederate women. Bitterly resentful of the Union occupation, whenever any of Butler's men were present they would contemptuously gather in their skirts, cross streets, flee rooms, cast hateful glances, or make derisive comments. Some sang spirited renditions of "The Bonnie Blue Flag" and other Confederate songs, or spat on soldiers' uniforms, while teaching their children to do the same. One woman emptied a chamber pot on Capt. David C. Farragut from her window shortly after the mayor surrendered the city to him.

The women hoped their actions would force a retaliatory incident serious enough to incite paroled Confederates to revolt against the occupation troops. Butler's men showed remarkable restraint against the insults, but he realized that it was only a matter of time until one of them, pressed too far, would arrest some female belligerent. Undoubtedly the men of New Orleans would attempt a rescue, and Butler feared his small force would be overcome. He dealt with the problem on May 15 by issuing General Orders No. 28, carefully worded to be self-enforcing:

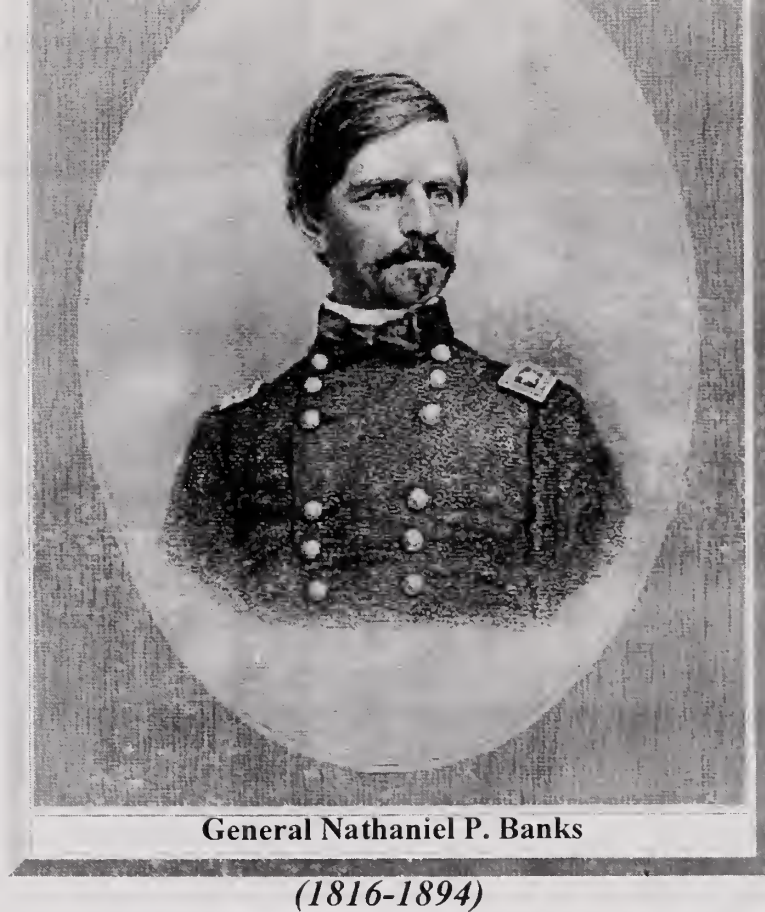
*"As the officers and soldiers of the United States have been subjected to repeated insults from the women (calling themselves ladies) of New Orleans, in return for the most scrupulous noninterference and courtesy on our part, it is ordered that hereafter when any female shall, by word, gesture, or movement, insult or show contempt for any officer or soldier of the United States, she shall be regarded and held liable to be treated as a woman of the town plying her avocation."*

Except for a few isolated incidents, the insults stopped abruptly when the women learned they would be treated as common whores for demeaning a man wearing a U.S. army uniform. A few who persisted were arrested and imprisoned on Ship Island, notably Mrs. Philip Philips, who was confined from 30 June until mid-September for laughing when the funeral procession of a Federal officer was passing her house.

The "Woman's Order" provoked criticism throughout the Confederacy and in Europe from people who considered his proclamation an unpardonable affront to womanhood. In defense of the order he emphasized the restraint his soldiers had shown civilians in New Orleans. Nevertheless, the infamous order excited indignation and personal animosity toward Butler. Many felt his nickname, "Beast" Butler, was well deserved.

Immediately upon learning of General Orders No. 28, John T. Monroe, Mayor of New Orleans, wrote a scathing letter to General Butler decrying the order. Strangely, almost as soon as it was written, Monroe retracted it and issued an apology. However, one who did not issue an apology was Jefferson Davis. President Davis issued a "Proclamation" branding Butler and his officers as nothing more than outlaws that would be hanged if captured.

Source: "Historical Times Encyclopedia of the Civil War" Edited by Patricia L. Faust



Of the 14 Union officers who received the Thanks of Congress during the Civil War, Nathaniel P. Banks was the least entitled. Serving under five different party labels during his political career, he rose from a childhood job in a cotton mill in his native Massachusetts-which earned him the nickname "Bobbin Boy"-to become speaker of the state legislature's lower house, U.S. congressman and just before the war, governor. As a political appointee, he was named a major general of volunteers. His field career was rather dismal but his appointment served its purpose in rallying support for the war effort.

His assignments included: major general, usv (May 16, 1861); commanding division, Department of Annapolis (ca. May - June 11, 1861); commanding the department (June 11 - July 19, 1861); commanding Department of the Shenandoah (July 25 - August 17, 1861); commanding division, Military District of the Potomac (August 17 - October 3, 1861); commanding division, Army of the Potomac (October 3, 1861 - March 13, 1862); commanding 5th Corps, Army of the Potomac (March 13 - April 4, 1862); again commanding Department of the Shenandoah (April 4 - June 26, 1862); commanding 2nd Corps, Army of Virginia (June 26 - September 4, 1862); commanding Military District of Washington, Army of the Potomac (September 7 - October 27, 1862); commanding 19th Corps, Department of the Gulf (December 16, 1862 - August 20, 1863); commanding the department (December 17, 1862-September 23, 1864 and April 22 - June 3, 1865).

With no prior military experience, he was in divisional and departmental command near Washington early in the war. In the Shenandoah Valley he was routed by Stonewall Jackson and due to his tremendous loss of supplies was dubbed "Commissary Banks" by the Confederates.

As part of Pope's army, he was again defeated at Cedar Mountain by Jackson and was at 2nd Bull Run. After a brief stint in the capital's defenses he went to New Orleans to replace Benjamin F. Butler. His operations against Port Hudson met with several bloody repulses but the place eventually fell after the surrender of Vicksburg made it untenable.

For obvious political reasons, Congress awarded a resolution of thanks to one of its former members. Remaining in the Gulf area, he led the dismal Red River Campaign of 1864 and was then for a time without a command. With hostilities virtually over, he was returned to command but was mustered out on August 24, 1865.

Continuing his political career, until 1890, he served in Congress, the state senate, and as a U.S. Marshal. Congress awarded him a \$1,200 annual pension.





Godfrey Weitzel

Born:

November 1 1835, Cincinnati OH

Died:

March 19 1884, Philadelphia PA

Pre-War Profession:

West Point 1855, construction of New Orleans fortifications, West Point instructor.

War Service:

1861 served in Fort Pickens, chief engineer to Butler's expedition against New Orleans, acting mayor of New Orleans, August 1862 appointed Brig. Gen. of Volunteers, 1863 commanded 1st Divn/XIX Corps at Port Hudson, chief engineer of Army of the James at Petersburg, commanded XVIII then XXV Corps, November 1864 promoted Maj. Gen. of Volunteers, Fort Fisher, commanded all troops north of the Appomattox River during final operations of the War.

Post War Career:

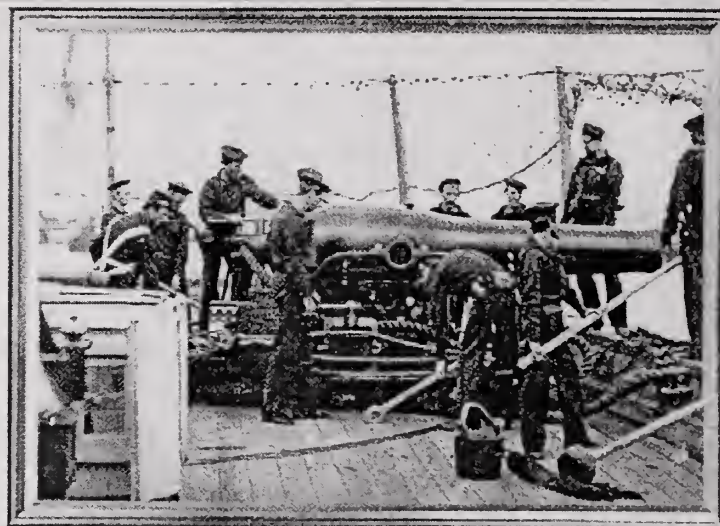
Army service in the engineers, constructed ship canal at the Falls of the Ohio, the great lock at Sault Sainte Marie and the lighthouse on Stannard's Rock in Lake Superior.

[Incidentally, it was General Butler who issued the notorious order that any woman who "insulted" a Federal soldier (as in not yielding the sidewalk when a negro troop brushed by) should be treated as a whore plying her trade, implying that rape would be tolerated. On another occasion, he ordered General Weitzel to compel the negroes of La Fourche Parish, Louisiana, to murder the white people of the parish. In reply to this order, general Weitzel wrote, "The idea of my inciting a negro insurrection is heart-rending. I will resign my command rather than induce negroes to outrage and murder the helpless whites."]

#### LINCOLN VISITS FALLEN RICHMOND

On April 4th, after visiting Petersburg briefly, President Lincoln decided to visit the fallen city of Richmond. He arrived by boat with his son, Tad, and was led ashore by no more than 12 armed sailors. The city had not yet been secured by Federal forces. Lincoln had no more than taken his first step when former slaves started forming around him singing praises. Lincoln proceeded to join with General Godfrey Weitzel who had been placed in charge of the occupation of Richmond and taken his headquarters in Jefferson Davis' old residence. When he arrived there, he and Tad took an extensive tour of the house after discovering Weitzel was out and some of the soldiers remarked that Lincoln seemed to have a boyish expression as he did so. No one can be sure what Lincoln was thinking as he sat in Davis' office. When Weitzel arrived, he asked the President what to do with the conquered people. Lincoln replied that he no longer gave direction in military manners but went on to say: "If I were in your place, I'd let 'em up easy, let 'em up easy" (Johnson, Robert Underwood, and Clarence Clough Buel, eds., Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Vol 4. New York: The Century Co., 1887).





## The Sailor's Life

Cavalrymen were not the only warriors who went into battle as passengers, though they were far more plentiful than their "webfoot" counterparts. Throughout the Civil War the navies of both the North and the South suffered from a shortage of manpower. On both sides the demands of the armies were so persistent that there were never enough sailors, especially experienced men, to complete the crews of all the ships in service. This proved particularly true in the South, where the pool of available seamen was very small under the best of circumstances. Stephen Mallory, the Secretary of the Navy, got the Confederate Congress to pass a law in 1863 whereby any man serving in the army who volunteered for the navy was to be transferred. Mallory claimed that hundreds of men volunteered, but that their military commanders would not release them. In the North, trained seamen were diverted into the army by enlistment bonuses, by local competition to fill regiments, by a desire to try something different, and by the draft. Sometimes it became necessary in both the North and the South to divert soldiers into naval duty. Usually the soldiers were not too pleased by the assignment. Some became disciplinary problems or deserted, but a number adjusted to the demands of the war and gave a good account of themselves.

One part of the Confederate Navy, at least, had no difficulty in attracting men: the ships *Alabama*, *Florida*, *Shenandoah*, and other famous commerce raiders. The commanders of such ships completed their manpower needs by drawing on the crews of the vessels they captured. The Confederates paid high wages and in gold. Those factors and the prospect of being a prisoner made a crucial difference. But the result was that a high percentage of the crews of these famous ships were foreigners.

In the South a young man wishing to join the navy had to have the consent of his parent or guardian if he was under twenty-one years of age. His counterpart in the North needed parental consent if he was under eighteen. No one under the age of thirteen was to be enlisted in the North, or under fourteen in the South. Height requirements for the Union Navy were at least five feet eight inches; those for the Confederacy were four feet eight inches. At the other end of the spectrum, no inexperienced man was to be enlisted in the Union Navy if he was over thirty-three years of age unless he had a trade. If he had a trade, thirty-eight was the age limit. In the South an inexperienced man with a trade could join if he was between twenty-five and thirty-five. Inexperienced men without trades were shipped as landsmen or coal heavers. Free blacks could enlist in the Confederate Navy if they had the special permission of the Navy Department or the local squadron commander. Slaves were enlisted with the consent of their owners, and some of them served as officers' servants as well as coal heavers and pilots. Before the war the United States Navy had tried to restrict the number of black men in the ranks to one-twentieth of the crew. During the



Civil War, however, the chronic shortages of men led Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles to suggest to the commander of the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron that he open recruiting stations ashore for the enlistment of blacks or contrabands. As a result of this and other activities, the Union Navy had a high percentage of blacks in the lower ranks. The normal pay scales in both navies ranged from \$12 a month for landsmen and other inexperienced hands to \$14 a month for ordinary seamen and \$18 a month for seamen. Boys were rated as third, second, or first class in ascending order according to their knowledge and physical ability. Third-class boys were paid \$7 a month, second class \$8, and first class \$9.

In both the North and the South it was customary to send the newly recruited men to a receiving ship. These were usually old frigates or other sail-powered ships that were stationed at navy yards in the North and functioned as floating dormitories. In the South old merchant ships were used at Richmond and at other major Southern ports. A recruit arriving on board a receiving ship reported to the officer of the deck. His name and other details went into the ship's books, and he was sent forward. Usually he received only the clothing needed for immediate service. In the North no civilian clothing was allowed, though shortages of uniforms later in the war sometimes made it necessary to modify this rule in the South. When the recruit arrived at the forward part of the receiving ship, he was given a number for his hammock and another for his clothes bag and was assigned to a mess.

While on board a receiving ship the recruit learned the rudiments of navy life. He learned how to address and to respect his officers, petty officers, and shipmates. Much time was spent in various kinds of drills, such as learning to handle sails, rigging, boats, and cutlasses, as well as the procedures for repelling boarders. The manpower demands of the Union and the Confederate navies meant that the amount of time a recruit was on a receiving ship ranged from a few days to a few weeks. Anything not learned on the receiving ship had to be learned in the hard school of active service. Periodically the commander of the receiving ship would receive orders to send a certain number of men to a vessel preparing for active service, or as replacements for a ship that had lost men through death, illness, or desertion.

Once a man reported to a ship in the regular service, he was assigned to various stations at the guns, on deck, in the tops, in a boat, at a mess, and in a hammock. Each had a number to be remembered. So, on a man-of-war, a given recruit or veteran might define his niche in the following way: He belonged to the starboard watch, was stationed in the top of the mizzenmast; he belonged to the third division of the battery, attached to gun number eight, where he was the first loader. In the event of a need to board an enemy vessel, he was the second boarder in his division. When it was necessary to loose or to furl sails, his post was at the starboard yardarm of the mizzen topgallant yard. In reefing sails his position was on the port yardarm of the mizzen topsail yard. When tacking or wearing the ship, his place was at the lee main brace. If the anchor was being raised, his duty was at the capstan. In a boat he pulled the bow oar of the captain's gig. Until all these assignments became second nature to him, the recruit might forget his numbers and have to refresh his memory by consulting the station bill, where everyone's position was recorded.

On gunboats and monitors all the duties associated with masts, rigging, and yards were eliminated, of course. These ships were also much smaller than a steam frigate or some of the merchant vessels converted to warships. But on these smaller ships there were still quarters, guns, and decks to be kept clean, and there were still watches to be kept. On all coal-burning vessels it was a constant problem to keep the ship and the guns clean. The actual work of coaling a ship left black dust everywhere. About the time that the dust was under control, it was time to recoal.

Any man with experience in the merchant service found life on a warship quite different, at least at times. In the merchant service, for example, when raising the anchor, the men at the capstan might sing a sea chantey. In the Navy this and other tasks were performed in silence lest some order from an officer not be heard. Loud talking by the men while on watch was frowned upon for the same reason. In warships of both the Union and the Confederacy, the shipboard routines were performed to the sound of shouted orders, boatswain's pipes, or a drum, depending on the situation

covered.

Joining the crew of a warship was apt to be quite a memorable experience for the recruit. Here he found himself among a wide variety of men. There were some older, weatherbeaten types who had been at sea for many years. In contrast to these were the young men of seventeen, eighteen, or younger, away from home for the first time. There were foreigners, including some not many months removed from their old environments in Europe. There were black men, including many who had recently left the slave status. Also caught up in such groups was an occasional North American Indian, or a Pacific islander. In a very real sense a man-of-war was the world in miniature, especially on Union ships. Crews of Confederate gunboats and other vessels that defended Southern harbors, inlets, and rivers were apt to be more homogeneous, especially early in the war.

For the Northern recruit particularly, adaptation to the cross section of humanity that comprised the crew was often difficult. Their early weeks and months in the Navy might be marked by personality clashes, accusations and counter-accusations, and fights. Marines and officers had the duty of stopping any affrays. The man who struck the first blow might find himself confined to the brig, in irons and on a diet of bread and water for twenty-four hours, as a warning not to persist in such conduct. A man who was wronged by another soon learned to settle his score indirectly rather than by fighting. His tormentor might find the rope of his hammock cut while he was asleep, or have a belaying pin dropped on his toes, or become the victim of other "accidents."

In the Union and the Confederate navies it was the specific duty of the commanding officer to see to it that ordinary seamen, landsmen, and boys were instructed in steering, in heaving the lead to determine the depth of the water, in knotting and splicing ropes, in rowing, in the use of the palm and needle to do sewing, and in bending and reefing sails. Mastery of these duties was necessary if the recruit hoped to qualify for promotion to seaman or to become a petty officer. Coal heavers with any intelligence at all could master the requirements necessary to become a fireman. In addition, the men were continually drilled in exercising the guns, in handling small arms and boats, and in using the boat howitzer. Anything not learned on the receiving ship was thoroughly learned on a ship in regular service. In the Confederacy, whenever the needs of war made it necessary to transfer from one ship to another, the men had to have additional training because no two ships had engines or guns that were exactly the same.

In both navies the daily routine was somewhat the same, depending on the size of the ship, the preferences of the captain, the season of the year, the needs of the moment. Sailors might begin their day as early as 4 A.M. if the ship had to be thoroughly cleaned or was scheduled to be coaled in the morning. Otherwise, a typical day might have gone as follows:

At 5 A.M. the marine bugler sounded reveille. The master-at-arms, or one of his corporals, and the boatswain's mate from the current watch ran around the berth deck shouting at the sleeping men and slapping hammocks. The men were ordered to get up and to lash up their hammocks and bedding into a tight, round bundle. These were then carried tip to the spar, or upper, deck. Here the hammocks were stored uniformly behind heavy rope nets, called nettings, along the bulwarks. Storing the hammocks here gave some small additional protection from gunshots and from wood splinters dislodged by cannon fire. The nettings also provided a barrier against boarders. In theory, a well-trained crew was supposed to rise, lash their hammocks, and deliver them to the spar deck in seven minutes. In practice, it may have taken that long to get some men out of their hammocks.

About 5:07 A.M. the crew got out sand, brooms, holystones, and buckets and washed down the decks. Usually the berth deck was scrubbed with saltwater, and the spar deck was holystoned by teams of men working under the direction of a boatswain's mate. In addition to the decks, the brass fittings and other bright work were polished.

Metal tracks on which the gun carriages turned were burnished. The guns themselves were cleaned. On ships that carried sails, the rigging, halyards (ropes for hoisting yards or sails), and blocks were checked and maintained as necessary. Once



the ship was cleaned, the sailors might fill the buckets with saltwater to wash themselves and to shave, if they so desired.

In a man-of-war, boys assembled at the port gangway at 7:30 A.M. for inspection by the master-at-arms. The boys were expected to have clean faces and hands, hair combed, and clothes clean and tidy. Their pants were supposed to be rolled up. After the inspection, each boy was expected to climb to the top of the masthead and come down. Each boy did his best to get up and down first. Sometimes the last boy down had to climb up and down again. The theory behind this routine was that it made the boys agile and gave them a good appetite for breakfast.

At 8 A.M. the boatswain piped breakfast. Cleaning equipment was put away and buckets were returned to their racks. Each man reported to his respective mess, which consisted of from eight to fourteen men. Members of a gun crew, coal heavers and firemen, and topmen would have their own messes, often determined by the watch to which they belonged. Marines and petty officers messed separately, and the boys were distributed among the messes. Each member of the mess took his turn as the orderly or cook, though sometimes one person would be hired by his messmates to do the job on a permanent basis. It was the job of the orderly to unlock the mess chest and take out the tableware and cooking utensils, as well as the food allotted to the mess each week by the ship's cook or by the paymaster. The individual kept track of his own knife, fork, spoon, and mug. For breakfast each man was served one pint of coffee without milk, as well as a piece of salt junk, or hard, salted beef. After breakfast the dishes were cleaned and returned to the mess chest.

Then, at 9:30 A.M. came the call to quarters. Guns were inspected to see that they were properly secured and ready for any emergency throughout the day. Once this was done, the men relaxed at their stations by writing letters, reading newspapers or books, or dozing.

Noon was the fixed time for lunch, so at that hour the men reported to their messes. Now they had a piece of beef or pork, vegetables, and coffee. Cheese might enhance the meal from time to time. On blockade duty there were opportunities to acquire fresh provisions from the shore areas, and these broke the monotony of the average meal served at sea.

The crews of the Confederate cruisers usually ate well as a result of their captures of merchant vessels, but for the rest of the Confederate Navy, items like cheese, butter, and raisins, while technically a part of the ration, were never available. Tea and coffee could be obtained from blockade runners, but at a great cost. Even so, the Confederate Navy usually ate better than the Army. One and one-quarter pounds of salted beef, pork, or bacon was issued to each man every day. As late as 1864 the men of the James River Squadron got meat three times a week.

After lunch the men might return to the stations they had left, or portions of the afternoon might be filled by various kinds of drills. Blockade duty proved so monotonous most of the time that commanders had to exercise their ingenuity to keep the men occupied. Training sequences were not the same on any two successive days; thus there was no predicting what would come next on the agenda. As Charles K. Mervine, a boy attached to a blockading squadron ship, wrote in 1863: "The life of a sailor is not one of a real and regular work, his hours of rest may not be uniform but they are more or less regulated. The details of a progame [*sic*] of any day on shipboard cannot be as fixed as in other forms of labor, yet its original outlines are the same day after day."

At 4 P.m. a light evening meal was served by the various messes. In this and the other meals, the timing was related to the watch sequence of four hours on and four hours off. Mealtimes were when the watch was relieved. From a nutritional point of view, there were objections to this format because in a twenty-four-hour sequence all the meals were crowded into less than eight hours. Since the noon meal was the main meal, men who stood watch at midnight or in the early hours of the morning might be quite hungry.

On blockade duty individual captains could alter the watch routine by splitting the period from 4 P.M. to 8 P.M. into two 2-hour watch segments called dogwatches. This meant that there would be seven watches instead of six in a twenty-four hour period. If

this was done, no watch would have to take the midnight to 4 A.M. shift for two nights in succession. An alternative was to divide the crew into three watches so that each man would be on duty for four hours and off for eight. Still other captains went so far as to use quarter watches, or one-fourth of the working hands, or half of each watch. In this system the watch would be divided into first and second parts, which would constitute the quarter watch. There were, however, those who believed that the use of quarter watches was unwise in dangerous waters.

The watch procedure was also used in coaling the ship. Such work might begin with the port watch and function in a prearranged order. Coaling might begin about 7 A.M. for the Union ships on blockade and be finished by noon, if the crew really worked at it. If they did not, and the work continued into the heat of the afternoon, the process could take as much as twelve hours. Because everything depended upon the time of arrival of the coal ship, there was no consistent time for the operation to begin. If the process began in the late afternoon, it might continue all night.

At 5:30 P.M. the sound of the drum called men to their quarters. Once again guns and stations were inspected to see that everything was ready for the night. This was especially important, for the hours of darkness were the times when the blockade runners were most active. Once the inspection was finished, the boatswain's pipe announced that the hammocks could be removed from the nettings and prepared for sleeping. Then came the period of relaxation for all who were not on watch. The men might write or read letters, or read newspapers and books. At this time and in other free periods during the day they repaired their clothing. Dominoes was a popular pastime. Cards were strictly forbidden. Gambling was also outlawed but went on covertly. It could range from simple games of calling odds and evens, matching money, or bets associated with daily activities, such as how long it would take them to overhaul another ship, to more formal games with dice.

At idle times in the afternoon or evening the men might also listen to music if they were fortunate enough to have a banjo or fiddle player on board. A larger ship might have some semblance of a band. On many vessels minstrel shows or theatricals were staged in the early evening, written and produced by the men themselves. Black crew members performed in minstrel shows along with their white comrades. On ironclads and monitors, of course, space was much more limited, and therefore so was the range of entertainment. In this as in every war, mail from home and from loved ones was looked forward to with great anticipation.

The daily scrubbing the ship received tended to keep the lower decks somewhat damp. This, combined with the daily humidity on the Southern stations, especially in the summer, made for a generally stuffy atmosphere. On monitors and gunboats the heat of the engines warmed the metal plating and the decks. There was also the smell of burning coal and sometimes of sulfur. The men tried to enjoy the fresh air as long as possible before retiring, for during the night the atmosphere on the berth deck sometimes became so oppressive that they had to congregate around the hatches for a breath of air.

Those who wished to smoke went to the forward part of the ship. Cigars and pipes were lit by a taper from a whale oil lamp and carefully extinguished. Hand-rolled cigarettes had been introduced into the United States from Turkey in the late 1850's but did not become popular until many years after the war. Friction matches were strictly forbidden on ships because of the danger of fire, and no uncovered light was allowed in any storeroom or in the hold. Lamps were carefully chosen to avoid any that used explosive oils for fuel.

On some ships it was a common practice to allow time after dinner for general horseplay, tomfoolery, and skylarking as a means of relieving tension. Other captains thought that tension was relieved by scheduled boxing matches in the afternoon. On more sedate ships the hours after dinner were the time for a quiet smoke, for telling or listening to a yarn, or for writing and reading.

Problems relating to the abuse of alcohol were common on all ships and in all ranks. The enlisted man's daily ration of grog, or one gill of whiskey mixed with water, was abolished by act of Congress in September 1862. In the Confederate Navy the enlisted men were entitled to one gill of spirits or a half pint of wine per day. This



continued throughout the war, though a man could receive money in lieu of the spirit ration if he chose. Originally this compensation was set at four cents a day, but it rose to twenty cents a day by the final years of the war. The Congress gave the Union sailor an additional five cents a day in lieu of the spirit ration. In both the Union and Confederate navies there were constant efforts to smuggle liquor on board ships, and some of these plans proved successful. Private vessels that sold food to the Union ships on blockade sometimes sold liquor in tins described as oysters or canned meats. Despite such ingenuity, the supply never matched the demand. When a man was discovered drinking or drunk, the usual practice was to place him in irons in the brig. On some ships drunks had saltwater pumped on them until they sobered up.

For the Union ships on blockade duty, tattoo normally sounded at 8 P.m. This was the signal for the men to go to their sleeping quarters and retire. Lights and fires were put out and there was to be no noise. Elsewhere the usual rule was that when the sun set at or after 6 P.M., the tattoo was beaten at 9. When the sun set before 6, tattoo was at 8. For the men of the Union blockading squadrons, going to bed was often accompanied by the latent fear that the ship might be the victim of a torpedo attack before morning. This was especially true after the Confederate submarine *Hunley* succeeded in sinking the U.S. steam frigate *Housatonic*. Sleep might also be interrupted by reports of a blockade runner entering or leaving a harbor. At such times the ship sprang to life as it pursued or overtook a potential prize.

As the control of the Union Navy over the rivers and coastal waters of the Confederacy increased, the opportunities for appropriate Southern countermeasures decreased. Hopes placed in the submarine *Hunley* or the ironclad *Albemarle* as a means of weakening the blockade were soon dashed. Overseas the famous Confederate cruiser *Alabama* went down in a fight with the Union cruiser *Kearsarge* in June 1864. Time was running out for the Confederate Navy.

For the men of the Union Navy the biggest problem was boredom. Despite daily activities of scrubbing, painting, drilling, target practice, entertainments, and the duties directly related to war, time passed slowly. Changing stations, taking on coal and supplies, entering and leaving harbors all added a bit of novelty to a day. But the men eagerly looked forward to short periods of liberty when their ship was at some Union-controlled port in the South, or was being repaired or overhauled in the North. Any time ashore was an occasion for the pursuit of liquor, women, or both. Men returned from such ventures drunk and often with venereal disease. Fevers and diseases common to the region also took some toll of both Union and Confederate sailors. In battle men could be killed in a horrible fashion by being scalded with steam from shattered engines. Even peaceful steaming on a river could become a hazardous affair when a Confederate sniper opened fire. Shore leave could also be dangerous if a man ventured too far inland or away from Union-held territory. Yet virtually any distraction was a welcome change from the boredom of blockade duty.

Sometimes a man slipped into deep despair over his daily duty. One naval surgeon called this condition land sickness. Those afflicted with it had a terrible urge to smell the earth and to breathe air far removed from the ocean. Sometimes a change of scene and some days ashore solved the problem, but for others the brief change did no good. For such men discouragement and despondency led to real illnesses, and they had to be sent home. It was boredom, and all the other aspects of life in the blockading squadrons, that led a former paymaster's clerk to write that "there was no duty performed during the whole war, in either the land or sea service, that was attended with so much toil, exposure and peril as this duty compelled." All the ship-to-ship fighting put together totaled little more than one week of battle out of four years of war. For the Yankee and Rebel seamen it was indeed a war of watch and wait as they sat imprisoned on their ships.

Source: "The Image of War: 1861-1865, Volume IV, Fighting For Time" Article by Harold D. Langley

[RETURN TO THE NAVAL WAR PAGE](#)

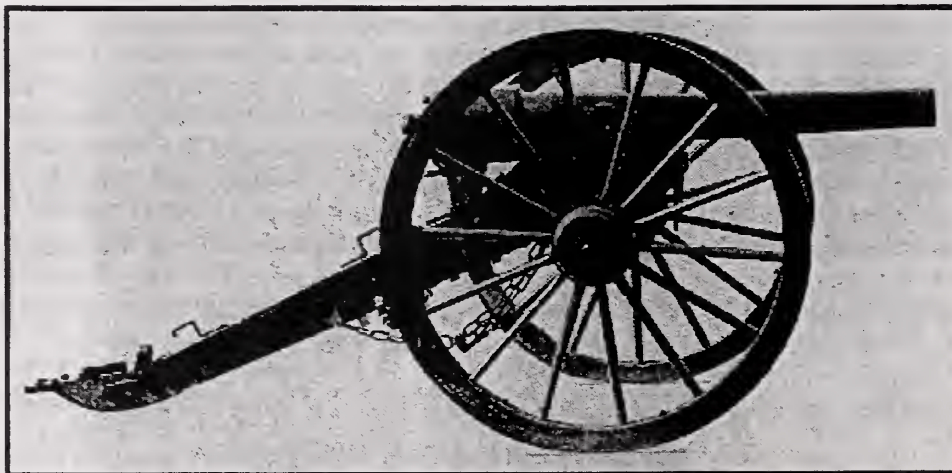


## Parrott Rifle

During the Civil War, artillery attained a lethal effectiveness that did much to make the conflict one of the deadliest in history. In support of infantry attacks, the guns hurled solid shot and explosive shell into the enemy's formations and fieldworks. On the defense, artillery could be even more destructive, firing shotgun-like canister blasts at close range into oncoming infantry. And rival gunners tried to annihilate each other with counterbattery fire, using shot and shell to wreck guns and blow up caissons full of ammunition.

When the war started, the opposing armies were mainly equipped with antiquated bronze-barreled smoothbore cannon. Most were of two types: guns firing 6-pound ammunition on a relatively low trajectory and howitzers able to loft 12-pound projectiles on an arcing trajectory. Soon the ordnance departments on both sides began producing more effective weapons, chiefly rifled, such as the 10-pounder Parrott pictured below. Invented by former Federal officer Robert Parrott, the Parrott Rifle was accurate and - because its barrel was made of cast iron rather than costly bronze - inexpensive to manufacture. A Parrott was able to hit a target at 2,500 yards, about twice the range of a smoothbore gun.

The table-off-fire chart, pictured below the Parrott Rifle, was pasted on the inside of the ammunition chest carried by limbers and caissons. This chart provided gunners and shell handlers with vital information concerning the performance of the gun and ammunition, including the elevations needed for various ranges and the number of seconds the projectile would be in flight.



## TABLE OF FIRE ARMS

### 10-PDR. PARROTT GUN

Charge, 1 lb. Of Mortar Powder

ELEVATION In Degrees	PROJECTILE	RANGE In Yards	Time of Flight In Seconds
1	Case Shot, 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.	600	
2	Case Shot, 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.	930	3
2 $\frac{3}{4}$	Shell, 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.	1100	3 $\frac{1}{4}$
3 $\frac{7}{8}$	Shell, 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.	1460	4 $\frac{3}{4}$
4 $\frac{1}{2}$	Shell, 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.	1680	5 $\frac{3}{4}$
5	Shell, 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.	2000	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
6	Shell, 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.	2250	7 $\frac{1}{4}$
7	Shell, 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.	2600	8 $\frac{1}{4}$
10	Shell, 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.	3200	10 $\frac{3}{4}$
12	Shell, 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.	3600	12 $\frac{7}{8}$
15	Shell, 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.	4200	16 $\frac{7}{8}$
20	Shell, 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.	5000	21 $\frac{7}{8}$

#### Care of Ammunition Chest

1. Keep everything out that does not belong in them, except a bunch of cord or wire for breakage; beware of loose tacks, nails, bolts, or scraps.
2. Keep friction primers in their papers, tied up. The pouch containing those for instant service must be closed, and so placed as to be secure. Take every precaution that primers do not get loose: a single one may cause an explosion. Use plenty of tow in packing.

(This sheet is to be glued to the inside of Limber Chest cover.)

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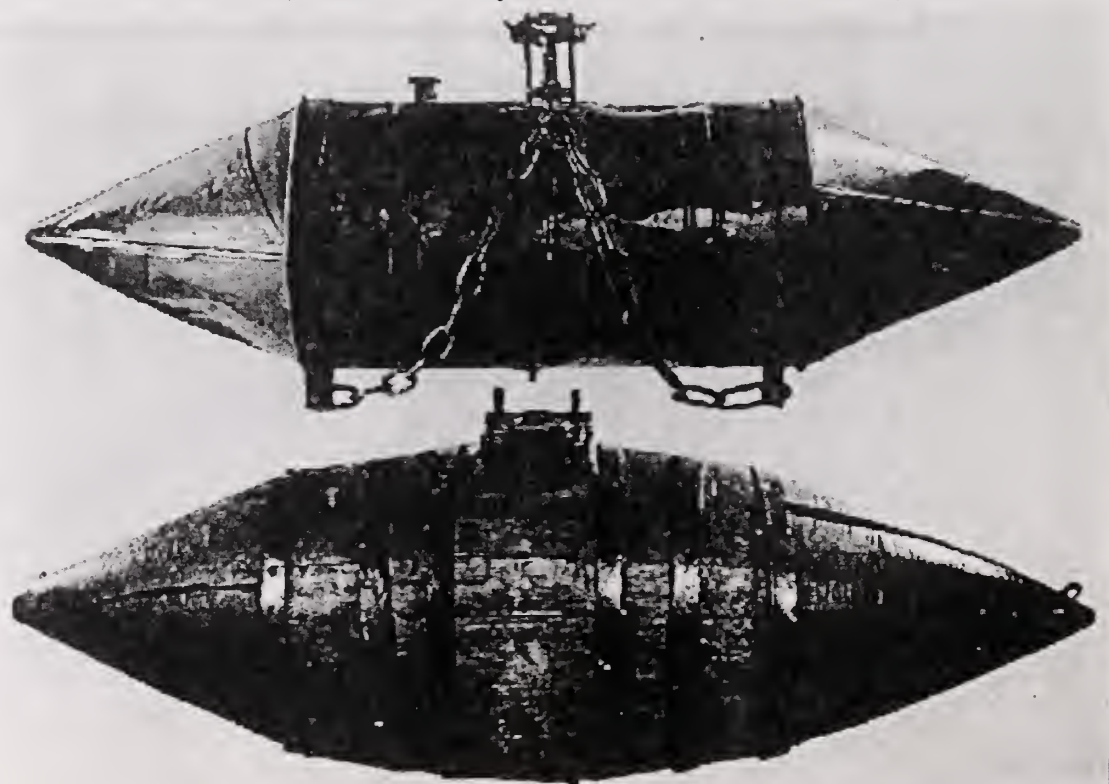
## Waterborne Mines to Fight the U.S. Navy

In October of 1862, the Confederate Congress created a new military branch, the Torpedo Service, to wage a novel sort of warfare. The men of this small, select service were responsible for sowing mines in Southern waterways and harbors to defend against Federal warships. They employed torpedoes - as mines were then called - of many sizes and shapes, with encased explosive charges that were detonated by contact with a vessel's hull or by remote control from shore.

Faulty detonators and poor waterproofing plagued the Confederate mines. Nevertheless, they did a great deal of destructive work throughout Southern waters, sinking or damaging 43 Federal vessels - including four powerful monitors - by the War's end.

The prospect of encountering an enemy torpedo constantly haunted Federal sailors. A U.S. Navy office wrote: "The knowledge that a simple touch will lay your ship helpless, sinking without even the satisfaction of firing one shot in return, calls for more courage than can be expressed, and a short cruise among torpedoes will sober the most intrepid disposition."

Two of the many mines that were developed by the Confederates are shown in the picture below. The mine on top is tin-sheathed and was supposedly more waterproof than its wooden counterpart below it. It exploded when a ship touched a trigger wire, attached to a nearby float. The mine on the bottom of the picture is the buoyant Rains keg torpedo and was the most common Confederate mine. Made from small beer kegs with wooden cones added to each end for stability, it was held just beneath the surface by an anchor.





Morris Raphael

1404 Bayou Side Drive  
New Iberia, Louisiana 70563  
Ph. 337 / 369-3220



July 29, 2001

Dear Mrs. Hanson:

Thank you very much for your nice letter of July 17 and the interesting data pertaining to Thomas Peterson.

Yes, you have my permission to use anything you wish from my book for family distribution. Do you have a copy of my book "The Battle in the Bayou Country"? If not, let me know, and I'll send you a copy.

Offhand, I couldn't find anything in my files that would be new to you. The following was taken from Phipps Dodge Allen's biography about the capture of the Diana:

"The Texans were not long in boarding the Diana, and they were no sooner on board than they began to rob the prisoners of all their private effects. The Texans robbed Captain Peterson and Executive officer Hall, and all the dead, of their

(over)

their boots and shoes. Captain Peterson had four or five hundred dollars in U.S. currency in his pocket, which the Rebels took charge of for their private use. Captain Peterson was shot in the pilot house, and was the first man shot. A ball penetrated his heart." (Hope this is of interest to you - should I find more I'll be sure to mail it on to you.)

Unfortunately, I'm not equipped for the internet - but I have a neighbor in Berkeley who may help me in collecting Civil War diaries and letters pertaining to my area. Should you have anything of this nature I'd appreciate your sending it to me.

Again thanks



Morris Raphael

1404 Bayou Side Drive  
New Iberia, Louisiana 70563  
Ph. 337 / 369-3220



Aug. 7, 2001

Dear Susan;

Thank you very much for sending me your nice booklet and letter. I found your work to be quite interesting and learned more about your colorful ancestor. Perhaps he is smiling somewhere that a descendent of his has taken time out to write about his exploits.

Please don't condemn Tom Petersson too severely, for after all, he was trained in a "macho" environment under the mighty Farragut who said "Damn the torpedoes - full speed ahead!" Tom probably said something like this at Madame Cochran's plantation "Damn the artillery and infantry - let's blow the hell out of 'em" and so, Susan, perhaps you should accentuate the positive and just say he was awesomely courageous.

The sources "River Falls" and "Ellsworth" which you asked about were evidently taken from some data submitted to me by the Wisconsin Historical Society with whom I corresponded. No, I do not know of any Union descendants whose ancestors fought on the Diana. But, strangely enough, last Friday after speaking to a couple hundred women at a 4-state convention of "The Order of the Confederate Rose", a lady came up and said she was a great granddaughter

(over)



of a confederate who fought on board the Diana. I was so engrossed in autographing books, she got away before I could grab her. It was very disappointing to me.

I'm enclosing a brochure of my works just in case some of the members of your clan might want to order copies.

I wanted to mention you did use a sizeable amount of my book in yours that is O.K. because you indicated your booklet would be distributed to members of the family. But I ask that you please be careful not to let others get ahead of it. My book is copyrighted - yours is not. And people do rob material.

It's been a pleasure corresponding with you and if ever you get down this way, my wife and I will take you on a time War Tour where the Diana made its rounds.

Sincerely,  
Morris

P.S. The book is a gift for you.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

By Robert Angers, Jr.

Morris Raphael, The Engineer, gave Morris Raphael, The Author, a research advantage all writers dream about. He spent years as an engineer reconnoitering the very terrain in the Bayou Country of Louisiana contested by men of the Blue and Gray in the closing months of the Civil War that he would write about as an author.

The weekday engineer unearthed old gun emplacements and artifacts of the struggle that whetted his literary appetite and filled the research library of the weekend author with valuable information about the amphibious campaigns and the skillful delaying actions in the Louisiana lowlands. It was material for an exciting history.

Born in historic Natchez, where he spent his boyhood, Raphael migrated from the Valley of the Mississippi to the Valleys of the Atchafalaya and Teche in Louisiana in 1939 and finally settled in New Iberia, "Queen City of the Teche." He is presently employed by J & L Engineering Company of Jeanerette as Industrial Products manager.

The engineer-author, Mississippi-Louisianian, met his California-born wife while helping build a carbon black plant in Brazil. He has had no difficulty reconciling his chosen profession with his writing ability and once, while serving as City Editor of the Franklin, Louisiana *Banner-Tribune*, he designed a new building to house the newspaper.

His literary works have varied from a crystal ball article on French Louisiana in the year 2000 for *Acadiana Profile Magazine*, to an historical account of battles between forces of the Union and Confederacy for *Dixie Magazine*, published as a Sunday supplement to the New Orleans *Times-Picayune*. Other journals, like the *Attakapas Gazette*, and newspapers like the Baton Rouge *Morning Advocate* and others in Louisiana have published his stories. He has also written technical articles for publications like the *International Sugar Journal*. Raphael's works have won awards in the annual Deep South Writers' and Artists' Conference at the University of Southwestern Louisiana in Lafayette.

He pays his civic rent with compounded interest, is an organizer of organizations, proponent of farsighted projects, is in demand as a lecturer and collects old bottles as a hobby. Raphael was a charter member and is a past president of the Franklin Jaycees; in 1959 he spearheaded formation of the Society of United States Ole Engineers and served a 5-year term as chairman; in 1965 he proposed a span across the Atchafalaya Basin linking St. Mary and Iberville parishes and in 1975 was serving as chairman of a special causeway commission.

The Lions Club of Franklin selected him as that community's outstanding citizen in 1948; the Rotary Club of Jeanerette and the Mount Carmel Parent-Teacher Association of New Iberia and the South Louisiana Industrial Managers Association have elected him president at different times.

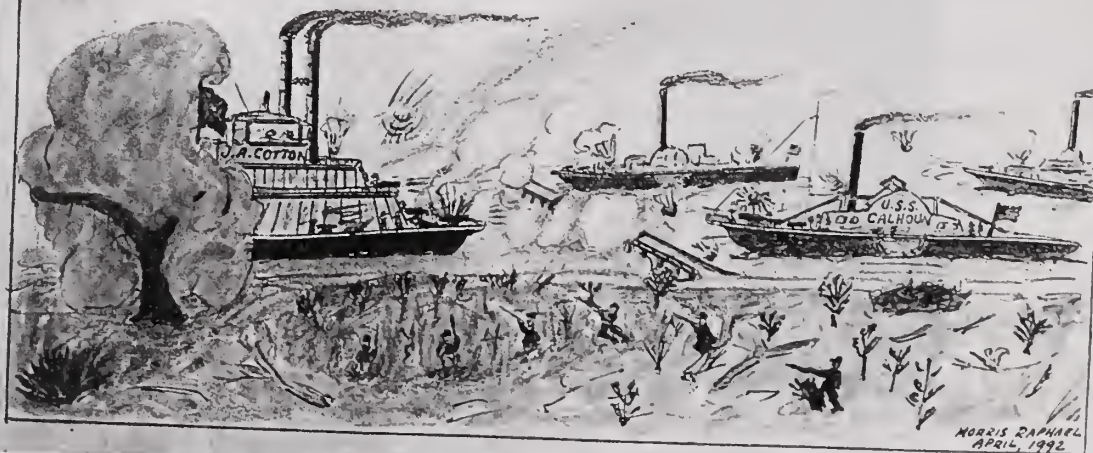
Raphael held board memberships in 1975 with the Attakapas Historical Society, the Acadiana Civil War Bicentennial Committee, the Iberia Cultural Resources Association and the New Iberia Kiwanis Club, as well as membership in the Louisiana Historical Society.

Civic performance helped provide a special kind of cross reference for his engineering reconnaissance enriching the detail of his history, a book that gives a unique dimension to the finale of the War Between the States in the Bayou Country.

ISBN 0-9608866-0-5

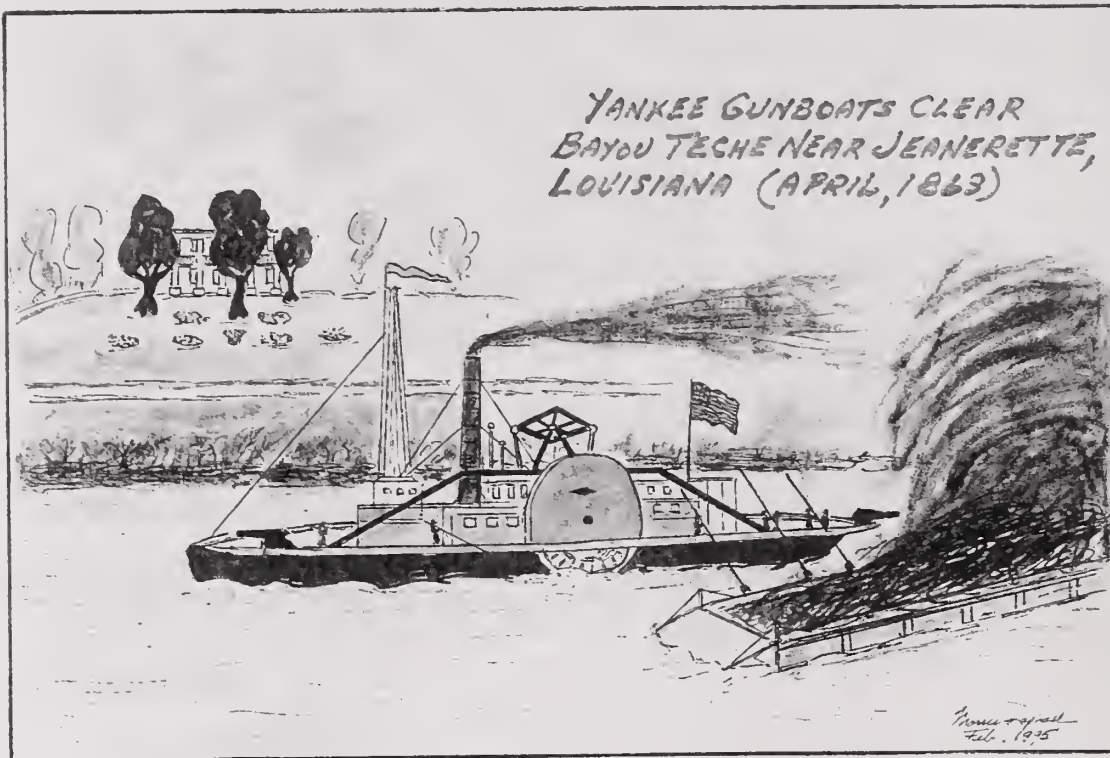


*THE GUNBOAT BATTLE AT CORNAY'S BRIDGE  
FOUGHT NEAR PATTERSONVILLE, LA.  
Jan. 14, 1863*



*In this action, Confederate Captain E. W. Fuller and his crew aboard the gunboat "Cotton" blasted away at four Union gunboats. This represented one of the most dramatic and courageous encounters of the Teche campaign. (For details, read Morris Raphael's book *The Battle in the Bayou Country*. His address: 1404 Bayou Side Dr., New Iberia, LA 70560)*

*YANKEE GUNBOATS CLEAR  
BAYOU TECHÉ NEAR JEANERETTE,  
LOUISIANA (APRIL, 1863)*



*In an attempt to block the Yankee fleet, the Richardson brothers at Bayside piled brush and timbers on their floating bridge, saturated it with pitch and set it ablaze. The Union gunboats, however, shoved the fiery obstacle aside and continued upstream. (For details of the Civil War in Acadiana, write Morris Raphael for a brochure of his works. 1404 Bayou Side Dr., New Iberia, LA 70560)*

JAAZANIAH GROSS m. ANNA LOMBARD

1792

ELIZABETH

m. 1813

1. Thomas Lombard

Sally

Betsey

ANNA GROSS m. Joshua H. Davis

m. 1821

2. John Peterson

THOMAS LOMBARD PETERSON

John

m. Ruth Hughes

Emily

1847

Emily

Elisha

Emily Elizabeth

Sarah

Emma

Thomas

Alice

Isaac

SARAH

m.

Lewis Lombard

Josiah

ISAAC m. Margaret Baker

Sarah Ellen

John Wm. Peterson

Anna

Mary

Solomon

JOSHUA, JR.

Emily

Sarah

Thomas

m. 1885

Cora

Hendrick

Eleanor

KENNETH

m. 1929

Harriett Steffens

Eleanor

Ruth

Helen

SUSAN

Jane

Elisha

KATHERINE LOMBARD

m.

Hermann Haas

RUTH HAASS

m.

Edward L. Dunn

ANNE E. DUNN

m.

James G. Harris

SANDRA A. HARRIS

m.

Chad Gilley



